Dec 1 1822

" John Adams Book "

True RELIGION *delineated*;

OR,

EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION,

As distinguished from FORMALITY on the one Hand, and ENTHUSIASM on the other, set in a Scriptural and Rational Light.

In Two DISCOURSES.

In which some of the principal Errors both of the ARMINIANS and ANTINOMIANS are confuted, the Foundation and Superstructure of their different Schemes demolished, and the Truth as it is in JESUS, explained and proved.

The whole adapted to the weakest Capacities, and designed for the Establishment, Comfort and Quickening of the People of GOD, in these Evil Times.

By *Joseph Bellamy*, A. M.

Minister of the Gospel at *Bethlem* in *Connecticut*.

With a Preface by the Rev. Mr. EDWARDS.

Isai. xxx. 21. *And thine Ears shall hear a Word behind thee, saying, This is the Way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right Hand, and when ye turn to the left.*

Matth. vii. 13, 14. *Enter ye in at the strait Gate; for wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.*

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PREFACE.

THE Being of GOD is reckon'd the firſt, greateſt and moſt fundamental of all Things that are the Objects of Knowledge or Belief. And next to that muſt be reckon'd the Nature of that Religion, which God requires of us, and muſt be found in us, in order to our enjoying the Benefits of God's Favour: Or rather this may be eſteemed of like Importance with the other; for it in like Manner concerns us to know how we may honour and pleaſe God, and be accepted of Him, as it concerns us to know that he has a Being. This is a Point of infinite Conſequence to every ſingle Perſon; each one having to do with God as his ſupreme Judge, who will fix his eternal

State, according as he finds him to be *with* or *without* true Religion. And this is alſo a Point that vaſtly concerns the publick Intereſts of the Church of God.

It is very apparent, that the Want of thoro' Diſtinction in this Matter, thro' the Defect either of ſufficient Diſcerning or Care, has been the chief Thing that has obſcured, obſtructed and brought to a Stand all remarkable Revivals of Religion, which have been ſince the Beginning of the Reformation; the very chief Reaſon why the moſt hopeful and promiſing Beginnings have never come to any more than Beginnings; being nipt in the Bud, and ſoon followed with a great Increaſe of Stupidity, corrupt Principles, a profane and atheiſtical Spirit, and the Triumph of the open Enemies of Religion. And from hence, and from what has been ſo evident from Time to Time in theſe latter Ages of the Church, and from the ſmall Acquaintance I have with the Hiſtory of preceding Times; I can't but think, that if the Events which have appear'd from Age to Age, ſhould be carefully examined and conſidered, it would appear that it has been thus in all Ages of the Chriſtian Church from the Beginning.

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They therefore who bring any Addition of Light to this great Subject, *The Nature of true Religion, and it's Distinction from all Counterfeits*, should be accepted as doing the greatest possible Service to the Church of God. And Attempts to this End ought not to be despised and discouraged, under a Notion that it is but Vanity and Arrogance in such as are lately sprung up in an obscure Part of the World, to pretend to add any Thing on this Subject, to the Informations we have long since received from their Fathers, who have lived in former Times, in NEW-ENGLAND, and more noted Countries. We cannot suppose, that the Church of God is already possessed of all that Light, in Things of this Nature, that ever God intends to give it; nor that all *Satan's* Lurking-Places have already been found out. And must we let that grand Adversary alone in his Devices, to ensnare & ruin the Souls of Men, and confound the Interest of Religion amongst us; without attempting to know any Thing further of his Wiles, than others have told us; tho' we see every Day the most fatal Effects of his hitherto unobserved Snares; for Fear we shall be guilty of Vanity or Want of Modesty, in attempting to discern any Thing

Thing that was not fully obſerved by our Betters in former Times? And that, whatever peculiar Opportunities God gives us, by ſpecial Diſpenſations of his Providence, to ſee ſome Things that were over-look'd by them?

The remarkable Things that have come to paſs in late Times, reſpecting the State of Religion, I think, will give every wiſe Obſerver great Reaſon to determine that the Counterfeits of the Grace of God's Spirit, are many more than have been generally taken Notice of heretofore; and that therefore we ſtand in great Need of having the certain and diſtinguiſhing Nature and Marks of genuine Religion more clearly and diſtinctly ſet forth than has been uſual; ſo that the Difference between that and every Thing that is ſpurious may be more plainly and ſurely diſcern'd, and ſafely determined.

As Enquiries of this Nature are very important and neceſſary in Themſelves, ſo they are what the preſent State of Religion in NEW-ENGLAND, and other Parts of the *Britiſh Dominions*, do in a peculiar Manner render neceſſary at this Seaſon; and alſo do give peculiar Opportunity for Diſcoveries beyond

yond what has been for a long Time. Satan transforming himſelf into an Angel of Light, has ſhewn himſelf in many of his Artifices more plainly than ordinary; and given us Opportunity to ſee more clearly and exactly the Difference between his Operations, and the ſaving Operations and Fruits of the Spirit of Chriſt: And we ſhould be much to Blame, if we did not improve ſuch an Advantage.

The Author of the enſuing Treatiſe has not been negligent of theſe Opportunities. He has not been an unwary or undiſcerning Obſerver of Events that have occur'd, theſe ten Years paſt. From the intimate Acquaintance with him, which I have been favoured with for many Years, I have abundant Reaſon to be ſatisfied that what has governed him in this Publication, is no Vanity of Mind, no Affectation to appear in the World as an Author, nor any Deſire of Applauſe; but a hearty Concern for the Glory of GOD, and the Kingdom and Intereſt of his Lord and Maſter Jesus Christ; And, that as to the main Things he here inſiſts on, as belonging to the diſtinguiſhing Nature and Eſſence of true Religion, he declares them, not only

as

as being satisfied of them from a careful Consideration of important Facts (which he has had great Opportunity to observe) and very clear Experience in his own Soul; but the most diligent Search of the holy Scriptures, and strict Examination of the Nature of Things; and that his Determinations concerning the Nature of genuine Religion, here exhibited to the World, have not been settled and published by him without long Consideration, and maturely weighing all Objections which could be thought of, taking all Opportunities to hear what could be said by all Sorts of Persons against the Principles here laid down, from Time to Time conversing freely and friendly with Gentlemen in the *Arminian* Scheme, having also had much Acquaintance, and frequent long Conversation with many of the People called *Separatists*, their Preachers and others.

And I cannot but express my sincere Wishes, that what is here written by this reverend and pious Author, may be taken Notice of, read without Prejudice, and thoroughly considered: As I verily believe, from my own Perusal, it will be found a Discourse wherein the proper Essence and distin-

diſtinguiſhing Nature of ſaving Religion is deduced from the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God, in a Manner tending to a great Increaſe of Light in this infinitely important Subject; diſcovering Truth, and at the ſame Time ſhewing the Grounds of it; or ſhewing what Things are true, and alſo why they are true; manifeſting the mutual Dependance of the various Parts of the true Scheme of Religion, and alſo the Foundation of the Whole; Things being reduced to their firſt Principles in ſuch a Manner, that the Connection and Reaſon of Things, as well as their Agreement with the Word of God, may be eaſily ſeen; and the true Source of the dangerous Errors concerning the Terms of God's Favour and Qualifications for Heaven, which are prevailing at this Day, is plainly diſcovered; ſhewing their Falſhood at the very Foundation, and their Inconſiſtence with the very firſt Principles of the Religion of the Bible.

Such a Diſcourſe as this is very ſeaſonable at this Day. And altho' the Author (as he declares) has aim'd eſpecially at the Benefit of Perſons of vulgar Capacity; and ſo has not laboured for ſuch Ornaments of Stile and

Language as might beſt ſuit the Guſt of Men of polite Literature ; yet the Matter or Subſtance that is to be found in this Diſcourſe, is what, I truſt, will be very entertaining and profitable to every ſerious and impartial Reader, whether learned or unlearned.

NORTHAMPTON,
Auguſt 4. 1750.

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

John Adams His Book 1751

The AUTHOR's

PREFACE.

WE *are designed, by* GOD *our Maker, for an endless Existence. In this present Life we just enter upon Being, and are in a State introducing to a never-ending Duration in another World, where we are to be for ever unspeakably happy, or miserable, according to our present Conduct. This is designed for a State of* Probation ; *and that, for a State of* Rewards *and* Punishments. *We are now upon Trial, and* God's *Eye is upon us every Moment ; and that Picture of our Selves, which we exhibit in our Conduct, the whole of it taken together, will give our proper Character, and determine our State for ever. This being designed for a State of Trial,* God *now means to try us, that our Conduct under all the Trials of Life, may discover what we be, and ripen us for the Day of Judgment ; when* God *will judge every Man according to his Works, and render to every one according to his Doings. He does not intend, in the Dispensations of his Providence, to suit Things to a State of Ease and Enjoyment, which is what this Life is not designed for ; but to a State of Trial. He puts Men into trying Circumstances of set Purpose, and as it were, contrives Methods to try them. One great End he has in View, is, that he may prove them, and know what is in their Hearts.*

He did not lead the Children of Israel *directly from* Egypt *to* Canaan, *but first thro' the* Red Sea, *and then out into a Wilderness, where there was neither Water, nor Bread nor Flesh; and made them wander there forty Years, that he might* try them, and prove them, and know what was in their Hearts. *Deut.* 8. 2. *So when the* Christian Religion *was introduced into the World, it was not in such a Way as Men would have chosen, but in a Manner suited to a State of Trial. The* Son of God *did not come in outward Glory, but in the Form of a Servant; not to reign as an earthly Prince, but to die upon the Cross: and his Apostles made but a mean Appearance in the Eyes of the World: and that* Sect *was every where spoken against, and persecuted: and many were the Stumbling-blocks of the Times. And these Things were to try the Temper of Mankind. — And when Christian Churches were erected by the indefatigable Labours of St.* Paul *and others, that God might thoroughly try every Heart, he not only suffered the wicked World to rise in Arms against them, but also let* Satan *loose, to transform himself into an* Angel of Light, *and, as it were, to inspire, and send forth his Ministers, transformed into the Apostles of Christ, to vent heretical Doctrines, and foment Strife and Division. In the mean while, the secure and wicked World looked on, pleased, no doubt, to see their Debates and Divisions, and glad they could have such a Handle against* Christianity, *& so good a Plea to justify their Infidelity. And God delighted to have Things under Circumstances so perfectly well adapted to a State of Trial.—— He loved to try the Apostles, to see how they would be affected and act; when not only the World was in Arms against them, but many of their own Converts turned to be their Enemies too, by the Influence of false Teachers. He loved to try private Christians, to see how their Hearts would be affected towards the Truths of the Gospel, and the true Ministers of Christ, and towards their temporal Interest; while the Truths of the Gospel were denied or perverted, and the true Ministers of Christ despised & stigmatised, by Hereticks, and their temporal Interest exposed to the Rage of a wicked merciless World. And he loved to try Hypocrites, to see whether they would not renounce the Truth they pretended so highly to value, and become disaffected towards*

towards the Ministers of Christ they seemed so dearly to love, and follow false Teachers, or fall off to the World.

It is reasonable and fit, and a Thing becoming and beautiful, that Beings in a State of Probation should be tried: and God looks upon the present outward Ease and Comfort even of his own People, as a Matter of no Importance, compared with Things spiritual and eternal. Eternity, with all it's Importance, lies open to his View; and Time appears as a Point, and all it's Concerns as Things comparatively of no Worth. If the Wicked are in Prosperity, and the Righteous in Adversity, or all Things come alike to all, God is well-pleased; because Things of Time are of so little Importance, and because such an Administration of Things is suited to a State of Trial. There will be Time enough hereafter, for the Righteous to be rewarded, and the Wicked punished. In this View of Things, we may, in a Measure, understand the darkest, and account for the most mysterious, Dispensations of divine Providence, and discern the Wisdom of the divine Government.

It has doubtless appeared as a Thing strange and dark to many pious Persons, and occasioned not a little Perplexity of Mind, to observe what has come to pass in New-England *since the Year* 1740. *That there should be so general an Out-pouring of the Spirit, so many Hundreds and Thousands awakened all over the Country, and such an almost universal external Reformation, and so many receive the Word with Joy; and yet, after all, Things come to be as they now are: so many fallen away to carnal Security, and so many turned Enthusiasts and Hereticks, and the Country so generally settled in their Prejudices against experimental Religion and the Doctrines of the Gospel, and a Flood of* Arminianism *and Immorality, ready to deluge the Land. But as strange and dark as it may have seemed, yet doubtless if any of us had lived with the* Israelites *in the Wilderness, or in the three first Ages after Christ, or in the Time of the Reformation from* Popery, *the Dispensations of divine Providence would upon the whole have appeared much more mysterious than they do now. And yet those were Times when God was doing glorious Things for his Church.—And indeed, it has happened in our Day,*

Day, however ſtrange it may ſeem to us, no otherwiſe than our Saviour foretold it commonly would under the Goſpel-Diſpenſation, at leaſt 'till Satan *is bound, that he may deceive the Nations no more. The* Sower *goes forth to* ſow, *and ſome Seed falls by the* Way-Side, *& ſome on* ſtony, *& ſome on* thorny, *and ſome on* good Ground ; *and while he is ſowing good Seed, an* Enemy *in the Night, the Devil unobſerved, ſows* Tares : *Now when the* Sun is up, i. e. *when new Times come on, and Trials approach, the main of the Seed is loſt ; not only what fell by the* Way-Side, *but alſo what fell on the* ſtony *and* thorny Ground. *And when the* good Ground *is about to bring forth Fruit, the* Tares *begin to appear too.* Mat. 13. *Thus it has always been. — This is a State of Trial, and God has permitted ſo many ſad and awful Things to happen in Times of Reformation, with Deſign to prove the Children of Men, and know what is in their Hearts.*

The Young People almoſt all over New-England *profeſſed, they would for ever renounce youthful Vanities, and ſeek the Lord.* " Well", *God, in the Courſe of his Providence, as it were, ſays,* " *I will try you.*" *Seeming Converts expreſſed great Love to Chriſt, his Truths, and Miniſters, and Ways ;* " *Well,*" *ſays God,* " *I will try you.*" *Multitudes, being Enemies to all true Religion, longed to ſee the whole Reformation fall into Diſgrace, and Things return to their own Channel ; and they ſought for Objections and Stumbling-Blocks :* " *Well,*" *ſays God,* " *You may have them, and I will try and ſee how you* " *will be affected, and what you will ſay, and whether you* " *will be as glad when the Cauſe of my SON is betrayed by* " *the Miſcarriages of thoſe that profeſs to be his Friends, as* " *the* Jews *of old were, when my SON himſelf was betrayed* " *into their Hands by* Judas." *Thus God means to try every one.*

A compaſſionate Senſe of the Exerciſes, which godly Perſons, eſpecially among common People, might be under in theſe evil Days, while ſome are fallen away, and others are clapping their Hands and rejoycing with all their Hearts to ſee Zion *laid waſte ; while* Arminians *are gloſſing their Scheme, and appealing to Reaſon and common Senſe, as tho' their Principles were near or quite ſelf-evident to all Men of Thought and Candour ;*

Candour; *and while* Enthusiasts *are going about as Men inspired and immediately sent by the Almighty, pretending to extraordinary Sanctity, and bold in it that they are so holy in themselves, and so entirely on the Lord's Side, that all godly People must, and can't but, see as they do, and fall in with them, unless they are become blind, dead and carnal, and got back into the World*; *A compassionate Sense, I say, of the Exercises of Mind, which pious Persons among common People might have, in such a trying Situation of Things, was the first Motive, which excited me to enter upon this Work, which I now offer to the Publick. And to make divine Truths plain to such, and to strip Error naked before their Eyes, that they might be established and comforted and quickned in their Way Heaven-ward, was the End I had in View. And accordingly I have laboured very much to adapt my self to the lowest Capacities, not meaning to write a Book for the Learned and Polite, but for common People, and especially for those that are godly among them.*

To these therefore, that they may read what I have written with the greater Profit, I will offer these two Directions.

(1.) Labour after determinate Ideas of God, and a Sense of his infinite Glory. *This will spread a Light over all the Duties and Doctrines of Religion, and help you to understand the Law and the Gospel, and to pry into the Mysteries, and discern the Beauties, of the divine Government. By much the greatest Part of what I have written, besides shewing what GOD is, consists in but so many Propositions deduced from the divine Perfections. Begin here therefore, and learn what GOD is, and then what the moral Law is*; *and this will help you to understand what our Ruin is, and what the Way of our Recovery by free Grace thro'* Jesus Christ. *The Bible is designed for rational Creatures, and has God for it's Author*; *and you may therefore depend upon it, that it contains a Scheme perfectly rational, divine & glorious. And the Pleasure of divine Knowledge will a thousand Times more than recompence all your Reading, Study and Pains: Only content not your selves with a general superficial Knowledge, but enter thoroughly into Things.*

(2.) Practise, as well as read. *The End of Reading and Knowledge is Practice. And holy Practice will help you*

you to understand what you read. Love GOD with all your Heart, *and* your Neighbour as your self; *and you can't but understand me, while in the first Discourse I shew what is implied in these two great Commands. And practise* Repentance towards God *and* Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; *and the second Discourse, which treats of the Nature of the Gospel and a genuine Compliance therewith, will naturally become plain and easy. And while you daily study divine Truths in your Heads, and digest them well in your Hearts, and practise them in your Lives, your Knowledge and Holiness will increase, and God's Word & Providence be better understood, your perplexing Difficulties will be more solved, and you be established, strengthned and comforted, in your Way Heaven-ward; and your Light shining before Men, they will see your good Works, and your Father which is in Heaven will be glorified. —— All which are the hearty Desire and Prayer of,*

Your Servant in JESUS CHRIST,

BETHLEM, April
25th. 1750.

Joseph Bellamy.

True Religion delineated.

DISCOURSE I.

Shewing the Nature of the Divine LAW, and wherein consists a real Conformity to it.

MATTH. xxii. 37, 38, 39, 40.

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind. This is the first and great Commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self. On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

The INTRODUCTION.

TRUE Religion consists in a Conformity to the *Law* of God, and in a Compliance with the *Gospel* of Christ. The Religion of innocent Man consisted only in a Conformity to the Law; the Law of Nature, with the Addition of one positive Precept: he had no need of Gospel-Grace. But when Man lost his Innocency and became guilty and depraved, when he fell under the Wrath of God and Power of Sin; he needed a Redeemer and a Sanctifier:

and in the Goſpel a Redeemer and a Sanctifier are provided, and a Way for our obtaining pardoning Mercy and ſanctifying Grace is opened; a Compliance, with which, does now therefore become Part of the Religion of a fallen Creature. Now if we can but rightly underſtand the *Law*, and rightly underſtand the *Goſpel*, we may eaſily ſee wherein a Conformity to the one, and a Compliance with the other, does conſiſt; and ſo what *true Religion* is.—For the preſent, let us take the *Law* under Conſideration. And it will be proper to inquire into theſe following Particulars.— 1. What Duty does God require of us in his Law?— 2. From what Motives muſt that Duty be done?— 3. What is that preciſe Meaſure of Duty which God requires in his Law?—— And a ſhort, but very clear and plain Anſwer to all theſe Queſtions we have before us in our Text; which is the Words of our bleſſed Saviour, and in which he does upon Deſign declare what the Sum and Subſtance of the Law is.— He had a Queſtion put to him in theſe Words; "Maſter, which is the great Commandment in the Law?" To which he anſwers—"Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart &c. this is the firſt.—The ſecond is like unto it &c." The ten Commandments are ſum'd up in theſe two, and every Duty enjoined in the Law, and inculcated in the Prophets, are but ſo many Deductions from theſe two, in which all are radically contained. A thorô underſtanding of theſe two will therefore give us an Inſight into all.——Let us now therefore begin with taking the *firſt* of theſe into particular Conſideration.——*Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart* &c.——Here is — 1. The Duty required, viz. *Love to God.*— 2. The Grounds & Reaſons of the Duty intimated. *Becauſe he is the Lord our God.*—— 3. The Meaſure of Duty required. *With all thy Heart* &c.

In diſcourſing upon theſe Words, I will therefore endeavour to ſhew,

I. What is implied in Love to God.
II. From what Motives we are required to love Him.
III. What is that Meaſure of Love which is required.

SECTION

SECTION I.

Shewing what is implied in Love to GOD.

I. I am to shew *what is implied in Love to GOD.*

And

1. *A true Knowledge of God* is *implied.* For this lays the Foundation for Love. A spiritual Sight of God, and a Sense of his Glory and Beauty, begets Love. When He that commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, shines in our Hearts, and gives us the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God; and when we with open Face behold as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, then we are changed into the same Image: The Temper and Frame of our Hearts become like God's: (To speak after the Manner of Men) we begin to feel towards God, in a Measure as he does towards himself; i. e. to love him with all our Hearts. 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. & 4. 6. For now we begin to perceive the Grounds and Reasons of that infinite Esteem he has of Himself, and infinite Complacency in Himself, and why he commands all the World to love and adore him. And the same Grounds and Reasons which move him thus to love Himself, and command all the World to do so too, do enkindle the divine Flame in our Hearts. When we see God, in a Measure, such as he sees Himself to be, and have a Sense of his Glory and Beauty in being what he is, in a Measure, as he Himself has, then we begin to love him with the same Kind of Love, and from the same Motives, as he Himself does: only in an infinitely inferiour Degree. This Sight and Sense of God, discovers the Grounds of Love to him: We see why he requires us to love him, and why we ought to love him, how right and fit it is; and so we cannot but love him.

This true Knowledge of God supposes, that in a Measure, we see God to be just such a One as he is; and, in a Measure, have a Sense of his infinite Glory & Beauty in being such. For if our Apprehensions of God are not right, it is not *God* we love, but only a false Image of him framed

in our own Fancy.* And if we have not a Senſe of his Glory and Beauty in being what he is, it is impoſſible we ſhould genuinely love and eſteem him for being ſuch. To love God for being what he is, and yet not to have any Senſe of his Glory and Beauty in being ſuch, implies a Contradiction. For it ſuppoſes, we have a Senſe of his Glory and Beauty when we have not: a Senſe of the Beauty and Amiableneſs of any Object being always neceſſarily implied in Love to it. Where no Beauty or Amiableneſs is ſeen, there can be no Love. Love cannot be forced. Forced Love is no Love. If we are obliged to try to force our ſelves to love anyBody, it is a Sign they are very odious in our Eyes, or at leaſt that we ſee no Beauty nor Amiableneſs in them, no Form or Comelineſs, wherefore we ſhould deſire or delight in them. (*Cant.* 8. 7.) In all Caſes, ſo far as we ſee Beauty, ſo far we love, and no farther.

Moſt certainly, that Knowledge of God which is neceſſary to lay a Foundation of a genuine Love to him, implies not only right Apprehenſions of *what He is*, but alſo *a Senſe of his Glory and Beauty* in being ſuch; for ſuch a Knowledge of God as conſiſts meerly in *Speculation*, let it riſe ever ſo high, and be ever ſo clear, will never move us to love Him. Mere *Speculation*, where there is *no Senſe* of *Beauty*, will no ſooner fill the Heart with Love, than a Looking-Glaſs will be filled with Love by the Image of a beautiful Countenance, which looks into it. And a mere ſpeculative Knowledge of God, will not, cannot, beget a Senſe of his Beauty in

* How falſe and dangerous therefore is that Principle, "That it is no Matter what Men's Principles be, if their Lives be but good."---- Juſt as if that external Conformity to the Law, might be called a good Life, which does not proceed from a genuine Love to God in the Heart:——or juſt as if a Man might have a genuine Love to God in his Heart, without having right Apprehenſions of Him!—— or juſt as if a Man might have right Apprehenſions of God, let his Apprehenſions be what they will! Upon this Principle, *Heathens*, *Jews*, and *Mahometans*, may be ſaved as well as *Chriſtians*. And upon this Principle, the Heathen Nations need not much trouble themſelves to know which is the right *God* among all the *Gods* that are worſhipped in the World, for it is no Matter *which God* they think is the true, if their Lives are but good. —— But----why has God revealed himſelf in his Word, if right Apprehenſions of God be a Matter of ſuch Indifferency

in being what he is, whenas there is naturally no Disposition in our Hearts to account Him glorious in being such, but wholly to the contrary. Rom. 8. 7. *The carnal Mind is Enmity against God.* When Natures are in perfect Contrariety, (the one sinful, and the other holy,) the more they are known to each other, the more is mutual Hatred stirred up, and their entire Aversion to each other becomes more sensible. The more they know of one another, the greater is their Dislike, and the plainer do they feel it.——Doubtless the fallen Angels have a great Degree of speculative Knowledge, they have a very clear Sight and great Sense of what God is: but the more they know of God, the more they hate him.

i. e.

Indifferency in Religion?---And why did St. *Paul* take such Pains to convert the heathen Nations to Christianity, and *so much* fill up his Epistles to them afterwards with *doctrinal Points*, and be *so strenuous* as to say, "If an Angel from Heaven should preach any other Gospel, LET HIM BE ACCURSED," if right Apprehensions of God, and right Principles of Religion be a Matter of such Indifferency!---- 'Tis strange that such a Notion should be ever once mentioned by any that pretend to be *Christians*, since it is subversive of the whole Christian Religion: making *Christianity* no safer a Way to Heaven than *Paganism*. Yea, such a Principle naturally tends to make all those who imbibe it, leave *Love to God*, and *Faith in Christ*, out of their Religion, and quiet themselves with a meer empty Form of external Duties. Or in other Words, it tends to make them leave the *Law* and the *Gospel* out of their Religion, and quiet themselves with *mere Heathen Morality*. For a Man cannot attain to *Love to God* and *Faith in Christ*, without *right Apprehensions of God and Christ*. Or in other Words, a Man cannot attain to a real Conformity to the Law, and to a genuine Compliance with the Gospel, unless his Principles respecting the Law and Gospel are right: But a Man may attain to a good Life, *externally*, let his Apprehensions of *God* and *Christ*, of *Law* and *Gospel*, and all his Principles of Religion, be what they will. Let him be a Heathen, or Jew, a Mahometan, or Christian; yea, if a Man be an Atheist, he may live a good Life externally; for any Man has sufficient Power to do every external Duty; and 'tis many times much for Men's Honour and worldly Interest to *appear righteous outwardly before Men*. Matth. 23. 28.

N. B. What is here said, may with a little Alteration, be as well applied to some other Sorts of Men. So the *Moravians* say "They care not what Men's Principles be, if they do but love the Saviour." So in *New-England*, there are Multitudes who care little or nothing what Doctrines Men believe, if they are but full of FLAMING ZEAL. Just as if it were no Matter what a Kind of *Saviour* we frame an Idea of, if we do but love him; nor what we are zealous about, if we are but FLAMING HOT.

i. e. their Hatred and Averſion is ſtirred up the more, and they feel it plainer. So awakened Sinners, when under deep and thorô Conviction, have comparatively a very clear Sight and great Senſe of God; but it only makes them ſee and feel their native Enmity, which before lay hid. A Sight and Senſe of what God is, makes them ſee and feel what his Law is, and ſo what their Duty is, and ſo what their Sinfulneſs is, and ſo what their Danger is: It makes the *Commandment come*, and ſo *Sin revives*, and *they die*. Rom. 7. 7, 8, 9. The clearer Sight and the greater Senſe they have of what God is, the more plainly do they perceive that perfect Contrariety there is between his Nature and their's. Their Averſion to God becomes diſcernible. They begin to ſee what Enemies they be to him: And ſo the ſecret Hypocriſy there has been in all their Pretences of Love, is diſcovered: And ſo their high Conceit of their Goodneſs, and all their Hopes of finding Favour in the Sight of God upon the Account of it, ceaſe, die away, and come to nothing. *Sin revived, and I died.* The greater Sight & Senſe they have of what God is, the plainer do they feel that they have no Love to him; but the greateſt Averſion. For the more they know of God, the more their native Enmity is ſtirred up. So again, as ſoon as ever an unregenerate Sinner enters into the World of Spirits, where he has a much clearer Sight and greater Senſe of what God is; immediately his native Enmity works to Perfection, and he blaſphemes like a very Devil: And that althô perhaps he died full of ſeeming Love and Joy. As the *Galatians*, who once loved *Paul*, ſo as that they could even have plucked out their Eyes and given him; yet when afterwards they came to know more clearly what Kind of a Man he was, then they turned his Enemies. And ſo finally, all the Wicked at the Day of Judgment, when they ſhall ſee very clearly what God is, will thereby only have all the Enmity of their Hearts ſtirred to Perfection.—From all which it is exceeding manifeſt that the cleareſt ſpeculative Knowledge of God, is ſo far from bringing an unholy Heart to love God, that it will only ſtir up the more Averſion. And therefore that Knowledge of God which lays the Foundation for Love, muſt imply

imply not only right Apprehensions of what God is, but also a Sense of his Glory and Beauty in being such. *

Wicked Men and Devils may know what God is, but none but holy Beings have *any Sense* of his infinite Glory and Beauty in being such; which *Sense* in Scripture-Language is called *seeing* and *knowing*. 1 Joh. 3. 6. *Whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him.* iii Joh. ver. 11. *He that doth Evil hath not seen God.* 1 Joh. 2. 4. *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Liar, and the Truth is not in him.* Because wicked Men have no Sense of his Glory and Beauty, therefore they are said not to know God. For all Knowledge without this is vain, it is but the Form of Knowledge. *Rom.* 2. 20. It will never inkindle divine Love. And in Scripture Sinners are said to be *blind*, because after all their Light and Knowledge, they have no Sense of God's Glory in being what he is, and so have no Heart to love him. And hence also they are said to be *dead*. They know nothing of the ineffable Glory of the divine Nature, and the Love of God is not in them. *Joh.* 5. 42. and 8. 19, 55.

2. Another Thing implied in Love to God is *Esteem*. Esteem, strictly speaking, is that high & exalted Thought of, and Value for, any thing; which arises from a Sight and Sense of its own intrinsick Worth, Excellency and Beauty. So a Sense of the infinite Dignity, Greatness, Glory, Excellency and Beauty of the most high God, begets in us high and exalted Thoughts of him; and makes us admire, wonder

* I grant, that if all our Enmity against God arises merely from our conceiving him to be our Enemy, then a Manifestation of his Love to our Souls will cause our Enmity to cease, and bring us to love him; nor will there be any need of a Sense of the moral Excellency of his Nature to produce it; and so there will be no Need of the sanctifying Influences of the holy Spirit. A Manifestation of the Love of God to our Souls will effectually change us. ---- And thus a Man may be under great Terrors from a Sense of the Wrath of God, and may see the Enmity of his Heart in this Sense: and may afterwards have, as he thinks, great Manifestations of the Love of God, and be filled with Love and Joy: and after all, never truly see the Plague of his own Heart, nor have his Nature renewed. And a Man's having experienced such a false Conversion, naturally leads him to frame wrong Notions of Religion, and blinds his Mind against the Truth. Many of the *Antinomian* Principles take Rise from this Quarter.

der and adore. Hence, the heavenly Hosts fall down before the Throne, and under a Sense of his ineffable Glory, continually cry, *Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, the whole Earth is full of thy Glory.* And Saints here below, while they behold as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are ravished; they esteem, they admire, they wonder and adore; and under some feebler Sense of the ineffable Glory of the divine Nature, they begin to feel as they do in Heaven, and to speak their Language, and say, "Who is a God like unto thee! Thy Name alone is excellent, and thy Glory is exalted above the Heavens."

This high Esteem of God, disposes and inclines the Heart to acquiesce, yea, to exult, in all the high Prerogatives God assumes to himself.

God from a Consciousness of his own infinite Excellency, his entire Right to and absolute Authority over all Things, is disposed to take State to himself, and Honour and Majesty, the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory; and he sets up himself as the most high God, supreme Lord and sovereign Governour of the whole World, and bids all Worlds adore him, and be in a most perfect Subjection to him, and that with all their Hearts; and esteems the Wretch, who does not account this his highest Happiness, worthy of eternal Damnation. God thinks it infinitely becomes him to set up himself for a GOD, & to command all the World to adore him, upon Pain of eternal Damnation. He thinks himself fit to govern the World, and that the Throne is his proper Place, and that all Love, Honour and Obedience are his Due. "I am the Lord, (says he,) and besides me there "is no God. I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my "Glory will I not give to another. And thus and thus shall "ye do, for I am the Lord. And cursed be every one that "continues not in all Things written in the Book of the "Law to do them." Now it would be infinitely wicked for the highest Angel in Heaven to assume any of this Honour to himself; but it infinitely becomes the most high God thus to do. And when we see his infinite Dignity, Greatness, Glory and Excellency, and begin rightly to esteem him; then his Conduct in all this will begin to appear infinitely right and fit, and so infinitely beautiful and ravishing,

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and worthy to be rejoyced and exulted in. Psal. 91. 1. *The Lord reigneth, let the Earth rejoyce : Let the Multitude of the Isles be glad thereof.*

And a Sight and Sense of the supreme, infinite Glory and Excellency of the divine Nature, will not only make us glad that he is GOD and KING and GOVERNOUR; but also exceeding glad that we live under his Government, and are to be his Subjects and Servants, and to be at his Dispose.— It will shew us the Grounds and Reasons of his Law, how infinitely right and fit it is that we should love him with all our Hearts, and obey him in every Thing : How infinitely unfit and wrong the least Sin is : And how just the threatned Punishment. And at the same Time it will help us to see, that all the Nations of the Earth are as a Drop of the Bucket, or small Dust of the Ballance, before him ; and that we our selves are nothing and less than nothing in his Sight. So that a right Sight and Sense of the supreme, infinite Glory of God, will make us esteem him, so as to be glad that he is on the Throne, and we at his Footstool ; that he is King, and we his Subjects ; that he rules and reigns, and that we are absolutely in Subjection, and absolutely at his Dispose. In a Word, we shall be glad to see him take all that Honour to himself which he does, and shall be heartily reconciled to his Government, and cordially willing to take our own proper Places ; and hereby a Foundation will begin to be laid in our Hearts for all Things to come to rights. Job 42. 5,6. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear : But now mine Eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor my self and repent in Dust and Ashes.* Isa. 2. 11. *The lofty Looks of Man shall be humbled, and the Haughtiness of Man shall be brought down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted.*— And that all this is implied in a genuine Love to God, not only the Reason of the Thing and the plain Tenour of Scripture manifest, but it is even self-evident ; for if we do not so esteem God as to be thus glad to have *him* take his Place and we *ours*, it argues secret Dislike, and proves that there is secret Rebellion in our Hearts. Thus therefore must we esteem the glorious God, or be reputed Rebels in his Sight.

3. Another Thing implied in Love to God may be call'd *Benevolence*. When we are acquainted with any Person, and he

he appears very excellent in our Eyes, and we highly esteem him, it is natural now heartily to wish him well; we are concerned for his Interest, we are glad to see it go well with him, and sorry to see it go ill with him; and ready at all Times chearfully to do what we can to promote his Welfare. Thus *Jonathan* felt towards *David*. And thus Love to God will make us feel towards him, his Honour and Interest in the World. When God is seen in his infinite Dignity, Greatness, Glory and Excellency, as the most high God, supreme Lord, and sovereign Governour of the whole World; and a Sense of his infinite Worthiness is hereby raised in our Hearts; this enkindles a holy Benevolence, the native Language whereof is, *Let God be glorified*, Psal. 96. 7, 8. *And be thou exalted, O God, above the Heavens: Let thy Glory be above all the Earth*, Psal. 57. 5, 11.

This holy Disposition sometimes expresses it self *in earnest Longings* that God would glorify himself, and honour his great Name; and bring all the World into an entire Subjection to him. And hence this is the native Language of true Love, *Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come, thy Will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven.* Mat. 6. 9, 10.—And hence, when God is about to bring to pass great and glorious Things to the Honour of his great Name, it causes great Joy and Rejoycing. Psal. 96. 11, 12, 13. *Let the Heavens rejoyce, and let the Earth be glad: Let the Sea rore, and the fulness thereof, let the Field be joyful, and all that is therein: Then shall the Trees of the Wood rejoyce, before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the Earth, he shall judge the World with Righteousness, and the People with his Truth.*

And hence again, when God seems to be about to do, or permit, any Thing, which, as it seems to us, tends most certainly to bring Reproach and Dishonour upon his great Name, it occasions the greatest Anguish & Distress. Thus says God to *Moses*, "This is a stiff-necked People, let me "alone that I may destroy them in a Moment, and I will "make of thee a great Nation." But says *Moses*, "What "will become of thy great Name? What will the *Egypti-* "*ans* say? And what will the Nations all round about say?" And he mourns and wrestles, crys and prays, begs and pleads,

pleads, as if his Heart would break. And says he, "If I "may not be heard, but this Dishonour and Reproach "must come upon thy great Name; it can't comfort me, "to tell me, of making of me a great Nation: Pray let "me rather die and be forgotten for ever, and let not my "Name be numbered among the living, but let it be blot-"ted out of thy Book." Well, says God, "I will hear thee. "But as truly as I live, I will never put up these Affronts; "but the whole World shall know what a holy and "Sin-hating God I am, and be filled with my Glory: For "the Carcases of all those, who have treated me thus, shall "fall in the Wilderness; and here they shall wander 'till "forty Years are accomplish'd, and then I will do so and "so to their Children, and so secure the Honour of my "Power, Truth and Faithfulness." And now *Moses* is content to live in the Wilderness, and do and suffer and undergo any Thing, if God will but take Care of his great Name. *Exod.* 32. *Numb.* 14.—And as it is distressing to a true Lover of God, to see God's Name and Works and Ways fall into Reproach and Contempt; and as on the other Hand there is no greater Joy then to see God glorify himself; *(Exod.* 15.) Hence, this World, even on this Account, may be fitly called *a Vale of Tears* to the People of God, because here they are always seeing Reproach and Contempt cast upon God, his Name, his Works and his Ways. And hence, at the Day of Judgment, all these Tears shall be wiped away from their Eyes, because then they shall see all Things turned to the Advancement of the Glory of his great Name, throughout the endless Ages of Eternity. *Rev.* 19. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Again, this divine Benevolence or wishing that God may be glorified, sometimes expresses it self in earnest Longings that all Worlds might join together to bless and praise the Name of the Lord: And it appears infinitely fit & right, and so infinitely beautiful and ravishing, that the whole intelligent Creation should for ever join in the most solemn Adoration. Yea, and that Sun, Moon, Stars; Earth, Air, Sea; Birds, Beasts, Fishes; Mountains and Hills, and all Things should in their Way, display the divine Perfections, and praise the Name of the Lord, because his Name alone

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is excellent and his Glory is exalted above the Heavens. And hence the pious *Psalmist* so often breathes this divine Language. Psal. 103. 20, 21, 22. *Bless the Lord, ye his Angels, that excel in Strength, that do his Commandments; hearkning unto the Voice of his Word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye his Hosts, ye Ministers of his that do his Pleasure. Bless the Lord all his Works, in all Places of his Dominion: Bless the Lord, O my Soul.* Psal. 148. 1,—13. *Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the Heavens: Praise him in the Heights. Praise him, all ye his Angels: Praise him, all his Hosts. Praise him, Sun and Moon,* &c. *Let them praise the Name of the Lord; for his Name alone is excellent,* &c. See also the 95, 96, 97, & 98th Psalms, *&c. &c.*

Lastly, From this divine Benevolence, arises a free and genuine Disposition to dedicate, consecrate, devote and give up our selves entirely to the Lord for ever; to walk in all his Ways, and keep all his Commands, seeking his Glory. For if we desire that God may be glorified, we shall naturally be disposed to seek his Glory. A Sight and Sense of the infinite Dignity, Greatness, Glory and Excellency of God, the great Creator, Preserver and Governour of the World, who has an entire Right unto, and an absolute Authority over all Things, makes it appear infinitely fit that all Things should be for him, and him alone; and that we should be intirely for him, and wholly devoted to him; and that it is infinitely wrong to live to ourselves, and make our own Interest our last End. The same Views which make the Godly earnestly long to have God glorify himself, and to have all the World join to give him Glory, thoroughly engage them for their Parts to live to God. After *David* had called upon all others to bless the Lord, he concludes with, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul.* And this is the Language of Heaven, Rev. 4. 11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power: For thou hast created all Things, and for thy Pleasure they are, and were created.* And it was their *Maxim* in the Apostles Days, *Whether they eat or drank, or whatever they did, all must be done to the Glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. And it was their Way, *not to live to themselves, but to the Lord*; (2 Cor. 5. 15.) Yea, *Whether they lived, to live to the Lord; or whether they died,*

to

to die to the Lord. Rom. 14.7,8. This was what they commended. *Phil.* 2. 20, 21. And this was what they enjoined, as that, in which the very Spirit of true Religion consisted. *Eph.* 6. 5, 6, 7. 1 *Cor.* 6, 20. *Rom.* 12. 1. & 7. 4.

All rational Creatures, acting as such, are always influenced by Motives in their whole Conduct.—Those Things are always the most powerful Motives, which appear to us most worthy of our Choice.— The principal Motive to an Action, is always the ultimate End of the Action. Hence, if God, his Honour and Interest, appear to us as the supream Good, and most worthy of our Choice, then God, his Honour and Interest, will be the principal Motive and ultimate End of all we do. If we love God supreamly, we shall live to him ultimately. If we love him with all our Hearts, we shall serve him with all our Souls.—Just as on the other Hand, if we love our selves above all, then Self-Love will absolutely govern us in all Things. If Self-Interest be the principal Motive,then Self-Interest will be the last End, in our whole Conduct.— Thus then we see, that if GOD be highest in Esteem, then *God's Interest* will be the principal Motive and the last End of the whole Conduct of rational Creatures : And if SELF be highest in Esteem, then *Self-Interest* will be the principalMotive and last End. And hence we may observe, that where *Self-Interest* governs Men, they are considered in Scripture, as *serving themselves.* (Hos. 10.1. Zec. 7. 5,6.) And where *God's Interest* governs, they are considered as *serving the Lord.* 2 Cor. 5. 15. Gal. 1. 10. Eph. 6. 5, 6, 7. compared with Tit. 2. 9, 10. To love *God* so as to serve *him*, is what the Law requires ; To love *Self* so as to serve *Self*, is *Rebellion* against theMajesty of Heaven. And the same infinite Obligations which we are under to love God above our selves ; even the same infinite Obligations are we under, to live to God ultimately, and not to our selves. And therefore it is as great a Sin to live to our selves ultimately ; as it is to love our selves supremely.

4. and lastly. *Delight* in God, is also implied in Love to him. By Delight we commonly mean,that Pleasure, Sweetness and Satisfaction, which we take in any Thing that is very dear to us. When a Man appears very excellent to us, and we esteem him, and wish him all Good ; we also at the

the same Time, feel a Delight in him, and a Sweetness in his Company and Conversation. We long to see him when absent; we rejoyce in his Presence; the Enjoyment of him tends to make us happy. So when a holy Soul beholds God in the infinite moral Excellency and Beauty of his Nature, and loves him supreamly, and is devoted to him entirely, now also he delights in him superlatively. His Delight and Complacency is as great as his Esteem, and arises from a Sense of the same moral Excellency and Beauty.— From this Delight in God arise Longings after further Acquaintance with him, and greater Nearness to him. Job 23.3. *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his Seat!* — Longings after Communion with him. Psal. 63. 1, 2. *O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: My Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty Land, where no Water is: To see thy Power and thy Glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary.* v. 8. *My Soul followeth hard after thee.*—A holy Rejoycing in God. Hab. 3. 17, 18. *Altho the Figtree shall not Blossom, neither shall Fruit be in the Vine: The Labour of the Olive shall fail, and the Field shall yield no Meat, the Flock shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no Herd in the Stall: Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the Rock of my Salvation.*— Finally, from this Delight in God arises a holy Disposition to renounce all other Things, and live wholly upon him, and take up everlasting Content in him, and in him alone. Psal. 73. 25,26. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth I desire besides thee. My Flesh and my Heart faileth, but God is the Strength of my Heart and my Portion for ever.*—The vain Man takes Content in vain Company; the worldly Man takes Content in Riches; the ambitious Man in Honour and Applause; the Philosopher in Philosophical Speculations; the legal Hypocrite in his Round of Duties; the evangelical Hypocrite in his Experiences, his Discoveries, his Joys, his Raptures, and confident Expectation of Heaven: but the true Lover of God takes his Content in God himself. *Psal.* 4. 6, 7. And thus we see what is implied in Love to God.

And

And now that this is a right Representation of the Nature of that Love, which is required in the first and great Commandment of the Law upon which chiefly all the Law and the Prophets hang, is manifest, not only from the Reason of the Thing, & from what has been already said; but also from this, that such a Love to God as this, *lays a sure & firm Foundation for all holy Obedience.* That Love to God is of the right Kind which will effectually influence us to keep his Commands. *Joh.* 15. 14. 1 *Joh.* 2. 3, 4, 5. But it is evident from the Nature of Things, that such a Love as this will effectually influence us to do so. As Self-love naturally causes us to set up Self and seek Self-Interest: So this Love to God will naturally influence us to set up God and seek his Interest. As delight in the World naturally makes us seek after the Enjoyment of the World, so this delight in God will naturally influence us to seek after the Enjoyment of God. And while we love God primarily for being what he is, we cannot but for the same Reason, love his Law, which is a Transcript of his Nature, and love to conform to it. If we loved him only from Self-love, from the fear of Hell, or from the hopes of Heaven; we might at the same time hate his Law: but if we love him for being what he is, we cannot but love to be like him: which is what his Law requires. To suppose that a Man loves God supremely for what he is; and yet don't love to be like him; is an evident Contradiction. It is to suppose a Thing supremely loved; and yet at the same time not loved at all. So that to a Demonstration, this is the very Kind of Love which the Lord our God requires of us. So Saints in Heaven love God perfectly, and so the good Man on Earth begins in a weak and feeble Manner to love God: for there is but one Kind of Love required in the Law; and so but one Kind of Love which is of the right Sort: for no Kind of Love can be of the right Sort, but that very Kind of Love which the Law requires. There is therefore no difference between their Love in Heaven, and our's here upon Earth, but only in Degree.

Section II.

Shewing from what Motives true Love to GOD takes its Rise.

II. I now proceed to shew more particularly, *from what Motives we are required thus to love God.* Indeed I have done this in Part already. For I have been obliged all along, in shewing what is implied in Love to God, to keep my Eye upon the first and chief Ground & Reason of Love, namely what God is in himself. But there are other Considerations, which increase our Obligations to love him and live to him; which ought therefore to come into the Account. And I design here to take a general View of all the Reasons and Motives which ought to influence us to love the Lord our God; all which are implied in those Words, *The Lord thy God. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, i. e.* because he is THE LORD and OUR GOD.

1. The first and chief Motive which is to influence us to love God with all our Hearts, is *His infinite Dignity & Greatness, Glory and Excellency*: Or in one Word, *His infinite Amiableness.* We are to love him with all our Hearts, because he is THE LORD, because he is what he is, and just such a Being as he is. On this Account primarily, and antecedent to all other Considerations, he is infinitely amiable; and therefore on this Account primarily and antecedent to all other Considerations, ought he to appear infinitely amiable in our Eyes. This is the first & chief Reason & Ground upon which his *Law* is founded, I AM THE LORD: (*Exod.* 20. 2. *Levit.* 19.) This therefore ought to be the first and chief Motive to influence us to *obey.* The principal Reason which moves him to require us to love him, ought to be the principal Motive of our Love. If the fundamental Reason of his requiring us to love him with all our Hearts, is, because he is what he is; and yet the Bottom of our Love be something else; then our Love is not what his Law requires, but a Thing of quite another Nature. Yea if the Foundation of our Love to God, is not because he is what he is, in Truth we love him not at all. If I feel a Sort of Respect to one of my Neighbours who is very kind to me,

me, and either do not know what a Sort of Man he is, or if I do, yet do not like him; it is plain, it is his Kindnesses I love, and not his Person; and all my seeming Love to him, is nothing but Self-Love in another Shape. And let him cease being kind to me, and my Love will cease. Let him cross me, and I shall hate him. *Put forth thine Hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy Face* (Job 1. 11.) as the Devil said concerning *Job*. And indeed so he would, had not his Love to God taken its rise from another Motive, than God's Kindnesses to him. But why need I multiply Words? For it seems even self-evident, that God's Loveliness ought to be the first and chief Thing for which we love him.

Now, God is infinitely lovely, because he is what he is. Or in other Words, his infinite Dignity & Greatness, Glory and Excellency, are the Result of his natural and moral Perfections. So that it is a clear Sight & realizing Sense of his natural & moral Perfections, as they are revealed in his Works and in his Word, that makes him appear to a HOLY Soul as a Being of infinite Dignity & Greatness, Glory and Excellency. Thus the Queen of *Sheba*, seeing and conversing with *Solomon*, and viewing his Works, under a Sense of the large and noble Endowments of his Mind, was even ravished; and cried out, *The one Half was not told me!* And thus the holy and divinely enlightned Soul, upon seeing God, reading his Word, and meditating on his wonderful Works; under a Sense of his divine and incomprehensible Perfections, is ravished with his infinite Dignity, Majesty, Greatness, Glory and Excellency; and loves, admires, and adores; and says, *Who is a God like unto thee!*

His natural Perfections are,

(1.) His *infinite Understanding*; whereby he knows himself, and all Things *possible*; and beholds all Things past, present and to come, at one All-comprehensive View. So that from Everlasting to Everlasting, his Knowledge can neither increase nor diminish, or his Views of Things suffer the least Variation; being always absolutely compleat, and consequently necessarily always the same.

(2.) His *Almighty Power*; whereby he is able, with infinite Ease, to do any Thing that he pleases.

And his moral Perfections are,

(1.) His *infinite Wisdom*; whereby he is able, and is inclined, to contrive and order all Things in all Worlds for the best Ends, and after the best Manner.

(2.) His *perfect Holiness*; whereby he is inclined, infinitely to love Right, and hate Wrong: Or according to Scripture-Phrase, *to love Righteousness and hate Iniquity*.

(3.) His *impartial Justice*; whereby he is unchangeably inclined, to render to every one according to his Deserts.

(4.) His *infinite Goodness*; whereby he can find in his Heart to bestow the greatest Favours upon his Creatures, if he pleases; and is inclined to bestow all that is best; all Things considered.

(5.) His *Truth* and *Faithfulness*; whereby he is inclined to fulfil all his Will, according to his Word: So that there is an everlasting Harmony between his Will, his Word, and his Performance.

And his Being, and all his natural and moral Perfections, and his Glory and Blessedness, which results from them, he has in himself, and of himself, underived; and is necessarily infinite, eternal, unchangeable, in all; and so absolutely Independent, Self-sufficient and All-sufficient.

"This is the God, whom we do love!
"This is the God, whom we adore!
"In him we trust, to him we live;
"He is our All, for evermore."

Now there are three Ways by which these his Perfections are discovered to the Children of Men: By his Works, by his Word, and by his Spirit. By the two first, we see him to be what he is: By the last, we behold his infinite Glory in being such. The two first, produce a speculative Knowledge: The last, a Sense of moral Beauty.

First, He discovers these his Perfections *by his Works*. i. e. by his *creating*, *preserving*, and *governing the World*; and by his *redeeming*, *sanctifying* and *saving his People*.

1. *By his creating the World*. He it is, who has stretched abroad the Heavens as a Curtain, and spread them out as a Tent to dwell in: who has created the Sun, Moon & Stars; and appointed them their Courses: who has hung the Earth upon nothing: who has fixed the Mountains, and bounded

and

the Seas, and formed every living Creature. All the heavenly Hosts he hath made, and created all the Nations that dwell upon the Earth: and the Birds of the Air, and the Beasts of the Field, and the Fishes of the Sea, and every creeping Thing, are the Works of his Hands: and the meanest of his Works are full of unsearchable Wonders, far surpassing our Understanding. *So that the invisible Things of God, from the Creation of the World, are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* As St. *Paul* observes, in *Rom.* 1. 20.

2. *By his preserving the World.* His Eyes run to and fro thro'out all the World, beholding every Thing. His Eyes are upon all his Works, so that even the Sparrows are not forgotten by him, and the very Hairs of our Heads are all numbred. And he holds all Things in being; and the opening of his Hand fills the Desires of every living Creature: even the whole Family of Heaven and Earth live upon his Goodness, and are maintained by his Bounty. In a Word, his infinite Understanding sees all, his infinite Power upholds all, his infinite Wisdom takes care of all, and his infinite Goodness provides for all; and that every Moment. So that the invisible Things of God are discovered in preserving, as well as in creating the World. And hence when the pious *Psalmist* meditates on the Works of Creation and Preservation, he sees God in them, and views his Perfections, and is touch'd at Heart with a Sense of his Glory, and is filled with high and exalted, and with admiring and adoring Thoughts of God. So Psal. 19. 1. *The Heavens declare the Glory of the Lord*, &c. And *Psal.* 95. 1. *O come let us sing unto the Lord*, &c.— But why? — ℣. 3. *For the Lord is a great God, and a great King, above all Gods.*—But how does this appear? Why, *ver.* 4, 5. *In his Hand are the deep Places of the Earth; the Strength of the Hills is his also. The Sea is his, and he made it: and his Hands formed the dry Land,* ℣. 6. *O therefore come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.*—And again in Psal. 96. 1. *O sing unto the Lord a new Song: Sing unto the Lord, all the Earth.*— But why? —℣. 4. *For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: He is to be feared above all Gods.*— But wherein does this appear? —Why—℣. 5. *All the Gods of the Nations are Idols: but the*

LORD made the Heavens.--And once more in Psal. 104. 1, 2, &c. *Bless the Lord, O my Soul.*—But why? —*Thou art very great, thou art cloathed with Honour and Majesty.* — But how does this appear?—Why?—*Thou hast stretched out the Heavens as a Curtain.* And ℣. 5. *And laid the Foundations of the Earth, that it cannot be removed for ever.* And ℣. 27. *All wait upon thee, that thou mayst give them their Meat in due Season.* ℣. 28. *That thou givest them, they gather; thou openest thy Hand, they are filled with Good.* And throughout the whole *Psalm* he is meditating on the Creation & Preservation of the World; and viewing the divine Perfections therein discovered, and admiring the divine Glory, and wondering and adoring: And finally concludes with, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul: Praise ye the Lord.* But,

3. *His Perfections are still much more eminently displayed, in that moral Government, which he maintains over the intelligent Part of the Creation: especially his moral Perfections.* In the Works of Nature his natural Perfections are to be seen: But in his moral Government of the World, he acts out his Heart, and shews the Temper of his Mind. Indeed all the Perfections of God are to be seen in the Work of Creation: If we view Angels and Men, and consider what they were, as they came first out of his Hands; holy and pure. But still God's Conduct towards them under the Character of their King and Governour, more evidently discovers the very Temper of his Heart. As the Tree is known by the Fruit; so God's moral Perfections may be known by his moral Government of the World. The whole World was created for a *Stage*, on which a variety of Scenes were to be opened; in and by all which, God designed to exhibit a most exact Image of himself. For as God loves himself infinitely, for being what he is; so he takes infinite Delight, in acting forth and expressing all his Heart. He loves to see his Nature & Image shine in all his Works, and to behold the whole World filled with his Glory. And he perfectly loves to have all his Conduct (the whole of it taken together) an *exact* Resemblance of himself; and infinitely abhors in his publick Conduct, *in the least* to counter-act the Temper of his Heart; so as by his publick Conduct, to seem to be, what indeed

indeed he is not. So that, in his moral Government of the World we may see his inward Disposition, & discern the true nature of his moral Perfections. And indeed all his Perfections are herein discovered. Particularly,

(1.) *His infinite Understanding.* High on his Throne in Heaven he sits, and all his vast Dominions lie open to his View. His All-seeing Eye views all his Courts above, and sees under the whole Heavens, looks thrô the Earth, and pierces all the dark Caverns of Hell. So that his Acquaintance with all Worlds and all Things is absolutely perfect and compleat. He can behold all the solemn Worship of Heaven, and the inmost Thoughts of all that great Assembly; he can behold all the Sin, Misery and Confusion that overspread the whole Earth, and the inmost Temper of every Mortal; and look thrô Hell and see all the Rebellion and Blasphemy and cunning Devices of those infernal Fiends: And all this at one All-Comprehending View. And thus, as high Governour of the whole World, he continually beholds all Things; whereby a Foundation is laid, for the Exercise of all his other Perfections in his Government over all. See the Omniscience of God elegantly described in *Psal.* 139. 1,—12. And being perfectly acquainted with himself, as well as with all his Creatures; hence, he cannot but see what a Conduct from him towards them, will, all Things considered, be most right and fit and amiable, and most becoming, such an One, as he is; and also, what a Conduct from them to him, is his Due; and their Duty. By his infinite Understanding he is perfectly acquainted with Right and Wrong, with what is fit and what unfit: And by the moral Rectitude of his Nature, he infinitely loves the one and hates the other, and is disposed to conduct accordingly; of which more presently. Psal. 147. 1. *Praise ye the Lord, for it is good to sing Praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and Praise is comely.*— But why? — ℣. 5. *Great is our Lord and of great Power,* HIS UNDERSTANDING IS INFINITE.— But wherein does that appear? —Why, ℣. 4. *He telleth the Number of the Stars: He calleth them ALL by their Names.* Now if the infinite Understanding of God may be seen in this one Particular; much more, in the regular ordering and disposing of all Things, throughout the

whole Universe: And that, not only in the *natural*, but also, in the *moral* World.

(2.) *His infinite Power*, is diplayed in the Government of the World. For he does according to his Pleasure in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth: so that none can stay his Hand, or hinder the Execution of his Designs.—Have Rebellions broke out in any Part of his Dominions? He has manifestly had the Rebels intirely in his Hands; they have lain absolutely at his Mercy; and he has dealt with them according to his sovereign Pleasure; and none has been able to make any Resistance; nor has there been any to deliver them out of his Hands. — When Rebellion broke out in Heaven, he crush'd the Rebels in a Moment: They fell beneath the Weight of his Hand; they felt his Power, they despaired, they sunk to Hell. And there he reserves them in Chains, nor can they stir from their dark Abode, but by his special Permission.—And when Rebellion broke out upon Earth, the Rebels were equally in his Hands, and at his Mercy: unable to make any Resistance: altho' he was pleased, in his infinite Wisdom, to take another Method with them. But he has since discovered his Power, in treading down his implacable Enemies, under Foot, many a time. He destroyed the old World, burned *Sodom*, drowned *Pharaoh* and his Hosts, and turned *Nebuchadnezzar* into a Beast. If his Enemies have exalted themselves, yet he has been above them, brought them down; and discovered to all the World, that they are in his Hands, and without Strength, at his Disposal. Or if he has suffered them to go on and prosper, and exalt themselves greatly, yet still he has been above them, and has accomplished his Designs by them, and at last has brought them down. Haughty *Nebuchadnezzar* when he had broken the Nations to Pieces, as if he had been the Hammer of the whole Earth, now tho't himself *some-body*. And *Alexander* the Great, when conquering the World, aspired to be thought the Son of *Jupiter*. But the most high God, the Great and Almighty Governour of the World, always had such Scourges of Mankind only as a Rod in his Hand, with which he has executed Judgment upon a wicked World. *Howbeit they meant not*

so

so, neither did their Hearts think so. But it was in their Hearts to gratify their Ambition, Avarice and Revenge. However, he was above them; and always such have been in his Hands as *the Ax is in the Hands of him that heweth therewith*, or as *the Saw is in the Hands of him that shaketh it*; or as *the Rod is in the Hand of him that lifteth it up.* And when he has done with the Rod, he always breaks it and burns it. See *Isai.* 10. 5—19.

And as this great King has discovered his Almighty Power by crushing Rebellions in his Kingdom, and subduing Rebels; so he has also, in protecting his Friends, and working Deliverance for his People. He made a Path for his People thrô the Sea; he led them thro' the Wilderness. He gave them Water to drink out of the Rock; and fed them with Angels Food. In the Day time he led them by a Cloud; and all the Night with the Light of Fire. He brought them to the promised Land, and drove out the Heathen before them: and in all their Distresses, whenever they cried unto him, he delivered them. And as the supreme Governour of the World, did thus in the Days of old discover his *Almighty Power* in governing among his intelligent Creatures; so he is still in various Ways and Manners, in his Providential Dispensations, evidently discovering that he can do all Things. And his People see it, and believe it; and admire, &adore. Read *Psal.* 105.

(3.) Again, *His infinite Wisdom*, is discovered in an endless Variety of Instances, in all his Government throughout all his Dominions; in his managing all Things to the Glory of his Majesty, to the Good of his loyal Subjects, and to the Confusion of his Foes. There has never any Thing happened in all his Dominions, and never will; but has been and shall be, made entirely subservient to his Honour and Glory. Even the Contempt cast upon him by his rebellious Subjects, he turns to his greater Glory. As in the Case of *Pharaoh*, who set up himself against God, and said, *Who is the Lord that I should obey him? I know not the Lord, nor will I let Israel go.* And he exalted himself and dealt proudly & haughtily; and hardened his Heart, and was resolved he would not regard God, nor be bowed nor conquered by him: for he despised him in his Heart. But

the more he carried himself, as if there were no God; the more were the Being & Perfections of God made manifest. For the more he hardened his Heart, the more stout and stubborn he was, the more God honoured himself in subduing him. Yea, God in his infinite Wisdom suffered him to be as high and haughty, as stout and stubborn as he pleased; he took off all Restraints from him, permitted the *Magicians* to imitate the Miracles of *Moses*, so that *Pharoah* in seeing might not see, nor be convinced: and he ordered that the Plagues should last but for a short Season, that *Pharoah* might have Respite; and thus it was that God hardned his Heart. And God in his infinite Wisdom did all this with a View to his own Glory. As he tells *Pharoah* by the Hand of *Moses*. — "Such and such Plagues I design to bring upon you, and to do so, and so, with you." *And indeed for this Cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee, my Power, and that my Name may be declared, throughout all the Earth*, Exod. 9. 16. And accordingly God was illustriously honoured at last upon *Pharoah*, and upon all his Host, at the *Red-sea*. And the *Egyptians*, and all the neighbouring Nations, were made to know that he was the LORD: and his Name became dreadful among the Heathen. And we find that in three or four Hundred Years after, the *Philistines* had not forgotten it. For when the *Ark* in the Days of *Eli*, was carried into the Camp of *Israel*; the *Philistines* were sore afraid; and said, "God is come into the Camp; Wo unto us. "Who shall deliver us out of the Hands of these mighty "Gods? These are the Gods that smote the *Egyptians*, "with all the Plagues in the Wilderness &c." 1 *Sam.* 4.

So God wisely ordered and over-ruled all Things, that befell the Children of *Israel* in the Wilderness, to accomplish the Ends he had in View. His Designs were to get himself a great Name, and fill the whole Earth with his Glory (*Num.* 14. 21.) and to try and humble his People, and make them know, that it was not for their Righteousness, that he brought them into the Land of *Canaan* (*Deut.* 9.) And every Thing that came to pass, for those forty Years, was admirably calculated to attain these Ends. The News of *Pharaoh*'s Overthrow, of God's coming down upon Mount

Mount *Sinai*, and abiding there for so long a Time, with such awful Majesty; and of the *Pillar* of Cloud by Day, and of Fire by Night; of the *Manna*, of the Water flowing out of a Rock and following them, of their Murmurings and Insurrections, and God's Judgments upon them; I say, the News of these, and of other Things of this Nature, that happened to them for those forty Years, flew all the World over, and filled all the Nations of the Earth with the greatest Astonishment; and made them think there was no God, like the *God of Israel*. (*Numb.* 14. 13, 14, 15.) By all these Things; and by God's bringing his People at last to the Possession of the Land of *Canaan*, according to his Promise; there was exhibited a Specimen of God's infinite Knowledge, Power, Wisdom, Holiness, Justice, Goodness & Truth: and that before the Eyes of all the Nations. And so the whole Earth was filled with his Glory: i. e. with the clear Manifestations of those Perfections in which his Glory consists. And thus his great End was obtained.——And in the mean time, all the Wandrings, and Trials, and Sins and Sorrows of the Children of *Israel*, together with all the wonderful Works which their Eyes beheld, and wherein God discovered himself, for those forty Years; had a natural Tendency to try them, to humble them, and break their Hearts, and make them know, that not for their Righteousness, nor for the Uprightness of their Hearts, did God at last shew them that great Mercy: and to convince them of the exceeding great Obligations they were under to love, and fear, and serve the Lord for ever. And so the other great End which God had in View was accomplished. *Deut.* 8. *&* 9, *and* 10. *Chap.*——And now, all these Things were by God wisely done; and in this his Conduct, his infinite Wisdom is to be seen.*——And thus it is in all God's Dispensations, thro'

* If God had so ordered, that *Abraham* had been born in the Land of *Canaan*, and his Posterity had multiplied greatly, and the other Nations gradually by Sickness and Wars had wasted away and come to nothing, until there were none but the Posterity of *Abraham* left, and they had filled the Land; God's Hand then would not have been seen: none of these excellent Ends attained: all would have been resolved

thro'out all his Dominions, with Regard to the whole Univerſe in general, and to every intelligent Creature in particular. His Works are all done in Wiſdom ; and ſo his infinite Wiſdom is diſcovered in all. And hence God appears infinitely glorious in the Eyes of his People. *Deut.* 32.3,4 *Pſal.* 104.24.& 105. 1——45. 1*Cor.*1.24—31.

(4.) Again, *His infinite Purity and Holineſs*, is alſo diſcovered in his Government of the World : in all that he has done, to eſtabliſh *Right*, and diſcountenance *Wrong*, thro'out all his Dominions. His creating Angels & Men in his own Image, with his Law written on their Hearts, manifeſted his Diſpoſition, and ſhewed what he was pleaſed with : But his publick Conduct as moral Governour of the World, has more evidently diſcovered, the very Temper of his Heart ; and ſhewn how he loves *Right* and hates *Wrong*, to an infinite Degree. Governours among Men diſcover much of their Diſpoſition,and ſhew what they love and what they hate, by their Laws : and they ſhew how fervent their Love & Hatred is, by all the Methods they take to enforce them : And ſo does the great Governour of the World. By his Laws, by his Promiſes & Threatnings ; by his paſt Conduct, and declared Deſigns for the future, he manifeſts how he loves moral Good and hates moral Evil.

By his infinite Underſtanding, he is perfectly acquainted with Himſelf, and with all his intelligent Creatures : and ſo perfectly knows what a Conduct in him towards them is right, fit & beautiful, and *ſuch* as becomes *ſuch a One as he is*. And alſo, perfectly knows what a Conduct in his Creatures towards him, and towards each other, is fit and amiable, and ſo their Duty. He ſees what is right, and infinitely

reſolved into natural Cauſes.---- Therefore God contrived where *Abraham* ſhould be born ; how he ſhould leave his own Country ; have a Promiſe of the Land of *Canaan* ; and how his Seed ſhould come to be in *Egypt*, come to be in great Bondage and Diſtreſs ; how he would ſend, and how he would deliver them, and how they ſhould carry themſelves, and what ſhould happen ; and how every Thing ſhould turn out at laſt : He laid the whole Plan, with a View to thoſe excellent Ends his Eye was upon. It was wiſely contrived : and when it came to be acted over, his infinite Wiſdom was diſcovered.

infinitely loves it, because it is right. He sees what is wrong, and infinitely hates it, because it is wrong. And in his whole Conduct as Governour of the World, he appears to be just what he is at Heart; an infinite Friend to Right, and an infinite Enemy to Wrong.

He takes *State*, sets up Himself as a GOD, bids all the World adore him, love and obey him, with all their Hearts; and that upon Pain of eternal Damnation, in Case of the least Defect: and promises eternal Life and Glory, in Case of perfect Obedience. This is the Language of his Law, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and thy Neighbour as thy self. Do this and live. Disobey and die.*— And now *all* that infinite Esteem for himself, and infinite Regard for his own Honour, which he herein does manifest, does not result from a proud or a selfish Spirit: for there is no such Thing in his Nature. Nor does he threaten Damnation for Sin, because it hurts him; or promise eternal Life to Obedience, because it does him any good: For he is infinitely above us, and absolutely independent on us, and cannot receive Advantage, or Disadvantage from us. *Job* 22. 2,3. *and* 35.6,7. But it results from the *infinite Holiness* of his Nature.— He loves and honours himself as he does; because, since he is what he is, it is right and fit he should. He bids the World adore, love & obey him with all their Hearts, because considering what he is, and what they be, it is infinitely fit and right. He commands us to love our Neighbour as our selves, because this also in the Nature of Things is right. And while he promises eternal Life to the obedient, and threatens eternal Damnation to the disobedient, he shews how infinitely he loves Righteousness, and hates Iniquity. His promising eternal Life and Glory to perfect Obedience, does indeed manifest the infinite Goodness & Bountifulness of his Nature: but then his promising *all* under the Notion of a *Reward*, discovers this Temper of his Heart, *his infinite love to Right*.

As to all his positive Injunctions, they are evidently designed to promote a Conformity to the moral Law. And as to the moral Law, it is originally founded upon the very Reason and Nature of Things. The Duties required therein, are required originally because they are right in themselves.

ſelves. And the Sins forbidden, are forbidden originally, becauſe they are unfit and wrong in themſelves. The intrinſick fitneſs of the Thing required, and the intrinſick unfitneſs of the Things forbidden, was the original Ground, Reaſon & Foundation of his Law. Thus he bids all the World love him with all their Hearts; becauſe he is the Lord their God: and love one another as Brethren, becauſe they are all Children of the ſame common Father, having the ſame Nature. He requires this ſupreme Love to himſelf, and this mutual Love among his Subjects, becauſe it is right that ſo it ſhould be; and becauſe he perfectly loves that the Thing that is right ſhould be done; and not from any Advantage that can poſſibly accrue unto him from the Behaviour of his Creatures. And he forbids the contrary, becauſe it is wrong, and therefore infinitely hateful in his Sight, & not becauſe it could be any Diſadvantage to him.--- All the Glory & Bleſſedneſs which he beſtows upon the Angels in Heaven under the Notion of a *Reward* to their *Obedience*, is not becauſe their Obedience does him any Good; for it does not: nor becauſe they deſerve any Thing from his Hands; for they do not: (*Rom.* 11. 35, 36.) but merely becauſe it is RIGHT, that they ſhould in all Things obey him. This is what he loves, and what he delights to honour. And all the infinite, eternal Glories of Heaven can but juſt ſerve as a ſufficient Teſtimony of his Approbation.-- So on the other Hand, it was not in a Paſſion, or from ſuddden raſh Revenge, (which many Times influences ſinful Men to cruel & barbarous Deeds,) that he turned thoſe that ſinned down into Hell; and for their firſt Offence doomed them to everlaſting Wo, without the leaſt Hope. For there is no ſuch Thing in his Nature. As he is not capable of being injured as we be, ſo neither is he capable of ſuch Anger as we feel. No: the Thing they did, was in itſelf infinitely wrong, and that was the true & only Cauſe of his infinite Diſpleaſure; which infinite Diſpleaſure, he meant to declare and make known, in the Sight of all Worlds, throughout the endleſs Ages of Eternity, by rend'ring to them according to their Deſerts. For he loves to appear as great an Enemy to Sin, in his Conduct, as he is in his Heart. He loves to act out his Heart, and exhibit

exhibit a true Image of himself. — His infinite Love to Righteousness and hatred of Iniquity, is also displayed in his promising eternal Life & Blessedness to *Adam* and to all his Race; a whole World of Beings, as a *Reward* to the Obedience of *Adam*; by him constituted publick Head and Representative; on the one Hand: and threatning eternal Destruction to him and all his Race, a whole World of Beings, in Case of the least Transgression; on the other Hand.—But his infinite love to Righteousness, and hatred of Iniquity, is manifested in the greatest Perfection, in the Death of Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son.—But of this more afterwards.—In a Word, all the Blessings which he has granted to the godly in this World; as Rewards of their Vertue; to *Abel*, *Enoch*, and *Noah*; to *Lot*, to *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* &c: and all the Judgments which he has executed upon the Wicked, his turning *Adam* out of Paradise, drowning the old World, burning *Sodom*, &c. together with all the Evils which befell the Children of *Israel*, in the Wilderness, in the Time of the Judges, in the Reigns of their Kings; and their long Captivity in *Babylon* &c. have all been publick *Testimonies* that the righteous Lord loveth Righteousness, and hateth Iniquity.——And in Heaven and in Hell, he designs to display to all Eternity, in the most glorious and dreadful Manner, how infinitely he loves Righteousness and hates Iniquity.

Now when true Believers, who are divinely enlightned, meditate on and view the Laws, the Conduct, and the declared Designs, of the great Governour of the World; they love, admire and adore; and say, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, the whole World is full of thy Glory. This divine Disposition, to love Righteousness and hate Iniquity, which the great Governour of the World thus discovers in all his Government, appears infinitely beautiful and glorious, excellent and amiable, in their Eyes: Whence they are ready to say, *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the Gods? Who is like unto thee? Glorious in Holiness.* As they in *Exod.* 15. 11. *

(5.) *His*

* If we should suppose (as some do) that there is nothing *right* or *wrong* antecedent to a Consideration of the *positive Will* and *Law* of God, the great Governour of the World; And that *Right* and *Wrong* result originally

(5.) *His impartial Justice*, is also discovered in his moral Government of the World. He appears in his publick Conduct, as One infinitely engaged to give to every one their Due: and as One absolutely governed by a Spirit of the most perfectly disinterested Impartiality.—He appears as One infinitely engaged to maintain the Rights of the God-head, and to secure that Glory to the divine Being that is his proper Due; and that by the Law which he has established, in Heaven and on Earth, binding all to love, worship and obey him, as GOD, upon Pain of eternal Damnation. And so again, he appears as One infinitely engaged

originally from his *sovereign Will* and *absolute Authority* entirely; then these manifest Absurdities would unavoidably follow,

1. *That the moral Perfections of God are empty Names, without any Signification at all.* For if there be no intrinsick moral fitness and unfitness in Things, no Right nor Wrong, then there is no such Thing as *moral Beauty* or *moral Deformity*; and so no Foundation in the Nature of Things for any *moral Propensity*; i. e. there is nothing for God to love or hate, considered as a *moral Agent*. There can be no Inclination or Disposition in him to love Right and hate Wrong, if there be no such Thing as Right or Wrong. So that the only Idea we could frame of God, would be that of an Almighty despotic Sovereign, who makes his own Will his only Rule, without any Regard to right or wrong, good or evil, just or unjust. An Idea of the infinitely glorious and ever-blessed God, evidently as contrary to Truth, as can be devised.

2. *That in the Nature of Things there is no more Reason to love and obey God, than there is to hate and disobey him:* There being in the Nature of Things no right nor wrong. Just as if God was not infinitely worthy of our highest Esteem and most perfect Obedience! And just as if in the Nature of Things there was no Reason why we should love and obey Him, but merely because he is the greatest and strongest, and says we *must!* Than which nothing can be more evidently absurd. But if these Things be so, then it will follow,

3. *That there is no Reason why he should require his Creatures to love and obey him, or forbid the contrary: or why he should reward the one, or punish the other:* There being in the Nature of Things no Right nor Wrong. And so the Foundation of God's Law and Government is overturned, and all Religion torn up by the Roots. And nothing is left but arbitrary Tyranny and servile Subjection. All expressly contrary to *Gen.* 18. 25. *Heb.* 1. 9. *Eph.* 6. 1. *Rom.* 12. 1. *Rev.* 4. 11. *Rom.* 7. 12. *Rom.* 2. 4, 5, 6. *Rev.* 19. 1----6. *Ezek.* 18. 25.

Or again, if we should suppose (as others do) that there is nothing *right* or *wrong*, antecedent to a Consideration of the general Good of the whole System of intelligent created Beings; And that

Right

engaged to secure all his Subjects here upon Earth in a quiet and peaceable Possession every one of their own proper Rights. And that by strictly enjoining every one to love his Neighbour as himself, and always do as he would be done by, and that upon Pain of eternal Damnation. (*Gal.*3.10. *Deut.* 27. 26.) — And he appears as One governed by a Spirit of the most perfectly disinterested Impartiality, in that he spared not the Angels that sinned, who

Right and *Wrong* result originally and entirely from the natural Tendency of Things to promote, or hinder the general Good of the whole : Then also these manifest Absurdities will unavoidably follow,

1. *That the moral Perfections of God entirely consist in, or result from a Disposition to love his Creatures supremely, and seek their Happiness as his only End.* Just as if it became the most High, to make a God of his Creatures ; and Himself their Servant! Expressly contrary to *Rom.* 11. 36. *Numb.* 14. *Rev.* 4. 11.

2. *That God loves Vertue and rewards it, merely because it tends to make his Creatures happy : and hates Vice and punishes it, merely because it tends to make his Creatures miserable.* Just as if he had no Regard to the Rights of the God-head, nor cared how much Contempt was cast upon the glorious Majesty of Heaven ! Expressly contrary to *Exod.* 32. *Numb.* 14. 1 *Sam.* 2. 29, 30. 2 *Sam.* 12. 10, 14. *Psal.* 51. 4.

3. *That he requires us to love and obey him, merely because it tends to make us happy, and forbids the contrary merely because it tends to make us miserable.* Just as if he had no Sense of the infinite Glory and Excellency of his Nature, and our infinite Obligations to love and obey him thence arising ! And just as if he thought it no Crime in us,to treat him with the greatest Contempt ! And just as if nothing could raise his Resentment but merely the Injury done to our selves ! Expressly contrary to *Numb.* 14. 2 *Sam.* 12. 10, 14. &c.

4. *That we are under no Obligations to love God, but merely because it tends to make us happy ; and that it is no Crime to hate, and blaspheme God, but merely because it tends to make us miserable.* But if so, then the Misery which naturally results from hating and blaspheming God, is exactly equal to the Crime : And therefore no positive inflicted Punishment is deserved in this World, or in that which is to come. And therefore all the Punishments, which God does inflict upon Sinners in this World, and for ever in Hell, are intirely undeserved. And so his Law and Government, instead of being holy just and good, are infinitely unreasonable, tyrannical and cruel. --- To say, that God punishes some of his sinful Creatures, merely to keep others in Awe, whenas they do not in the least deserve any Punishment, is to suppose the great Governour of the World to do Evil that Good may come, and yet at the same Time to take the most direct Course to render himself odious throughout all his Dominions. It is impossible

who were ſome of the nobleſt of all his Creatures: and in that he is determined not to ſpare impenitent Sinners at the Day of Judgment, tho' they cry ever ſo earneſtly for Mercy: But above all, in that he ſpared not his only begotten Son, when he ſtood in the Room of Sinners.— If ever any poor guilty Wretch, round the World, feels tempted to think that God is cruel for damning Sinners, and does not do as he would be done by, if he was in their Caſe, and they in his: Let him come away to the Croſs of Chriſt, and ſee God's own Son, his ſecond Self, there nailed up, naked, bleeding, groaning, dying, in the greateſt poſſible Contempt, Ignominy & Shame, before ten Thouſand inſulting, blood-thirſty Spectators. And let him know that this Jeſus is GOD: A Perſon of infinitely greater Dignity and Worth, than all Creatures in Heaven & Earth put together; and infinitely dear to the great Governour of the World, even juſt as dear as his own Self, and upon whom he would not lay theſe Sufferings any ſooner than upon himſelf: I ſay, let him ſtand and look and gaze, and learn, that God does exactly as he would be done by, when he damns Sinners to all Eternity, were he in their Caſe,

ble to account for the Puniſhments which God has inflicted upon Sinners in this World, and deſigns to inflict upon them for ever in Hell, without ſuppoſing that there is an infinite Evil in Sin, over and above what reſults from its natural tendency to make us miſerable: and that therefore we are under infinite Obligations to love and obey God antecedent to any Conſideration of it's tendency to make us happy.

From all which it is evident to Demonſtration, that Right and Wrong, do neither reſult from the mere Will and Law of God, nor from any tendency of Things to promote or hinder the Happineſs of God's Creatures. It remains therefore, that there is an intrinſic moral Fitneſs and Unfitneſs abſolutely in Things themſelves: As that we ſhould love the infinitely glorious God, is in the Nature of Things infinitely fit and right: and to hate and blaſpheme him, is in the Nature of Things infinitely unfit and wrong: And that antecedent to any Conſideration of Advantage or Diſadvantage, Reward or Puniſhment, or even of the Will or Law of God. And hence it is, that God infinitely loves Right & hates Wrong, and appears ſo infinitely engaged to reward the one, and puniſh the other. And hence his Law and Government are holy, juſt and good. They are glorious; and in and by them the infinite Glory of the divine Nature ſhines forth. *Iſai.* 6. 3. *Rev.* 4. 8. *Rev.* 19. 1---6.

Case, and they in his (if I may so say, when speaking of the most high God) since that for his own Son, a Person of infinite Dignity, to suffer all these Things, is equivalent to the eternal Torments of finite Creatures.—Indeed, it was not because he was not a Being of infinite Goodness, that he treated his own Son so; nor is it because he has no Regard to his Creatures Happiness, that he designs to damn the finally Impenitent: but it is merely because Sin is an infinite Evil, and according to strict Justice worthy of an infinite Punishment: it is right and fit that he should do as he does, and therefore his Conduct will for ever appear infinitely glorious and beautiful in the Eyes of all holy Beings. Psal. 96. 11, 12, 13. *Let the Heavens rejoyce, and let the Earth be glad: Let the Sea rore and the fulness thereof. Let the Field be joyful, and all that is therein: Then shall all the Trees of the Wood rejoyce. Before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh, to judge the Earth: He shall judge the World with Righteousness, and the People with his Truth.* See also *Rev.* 19. 1,——6.

(6.) *His infinite Goodness*, is also discovered in his Government of the World. For all the Laws of this great and good Governour are suited in their own Nature to advance all his Subjects to the highest Perfection they are capable of. His Law teaches us to view all Things just as they be, and to have our Will & Affections entirely governed by the Truth, by the very Reason and Nature of Things. And so to be according to the Measure of such finite Creatures, in our Wills and in the Temper of our Minds, after the Image of the blessed and glorious God, which is the highest Dignity and Perfection, we are possibly capable of. When God commands us to be holy as he is holy, he enjoins that as our Duty, which at the same Time is our highest possible Priviledge. He bids us be like the Angels, and begin our Heaven upon Earth; yea, even to participate of a Glory & Blessedness, of the same Nature with that, which he himself enjoys. To behold his Glory, to be ravished with his Beauty, to esteem him supremely, live to him entirely, & delight in him superlatively, and to become like him in our Views of Things, & in the

Temper of our Minds, is our higheſt Dignity, Glory and Excellency, and our higheſt Bleſſedneſs.——And beſides, his Laws are ſtill further calculated to promote the Welfare of his Subjects, in that they are ſuited to eſtabliſh a univerſal Love, Peace & Harmony, throughout all his Dominions. *Love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, is one of the fundamental Laws of his Kingdom. And were his Authority duly regarded, and his Laws obeyed, Love and Peace and Harmony, with all their happy and bleſſed Effects, would reign thrô all the Earth, as they do in Heaven: And Paradiſe would not be confined to *Eden*, nor to Heaven, but be all over the World.

And the Wrath of this good Governour is only revealed againſt all Ungodlineſs & Unrighteouſneſs of Men, which are the Ruin and Debaſement of our Nature, and the Deſtruction of our Peace and Happineſs. He threatens Damnation to his Subjects, to keep them from deſtroying themſelves, as well as to deter them from affronting his Majeſty. All the dreadful Threatnings of his Law reſult not only from his Holineſs and Juſtice, but alſo even from the infinite Goodneſs of his Nature: in that hereby his Subjects are mercifully fore-warned of the evil and bitter Conſequences of Sin, to the End they may avoid it.—— He is a perfect Enemy to Hatred & Revenge, to Cruelty and Injuſtice. He can't bear to ſee the Widow or Fatherleſs oppreſs'd, or the Poor deſpiſed, or the Miſerable inſulted, or any evil Thing done among his Subjects. And therefore this good Governour has threatned Tribulation and Anguiſh, Indignation & Wrath, againſt every Soul that doth Evil; and with all his Authority has commanded his Subjects thrô all this World, upon Pain of eternal Damnation, to do as they would be done by.

And then ſtill further to engage his Subjects to that, in which their greateſt Glory and Bleſſedneſs conſiſts, he in his Law promiſes eternal Life to the obedient. Wherein the infinite Bountifulneſs of his Nature, as well as his unſpeakable Concern for his Creatures Welfare, is diſcovered.

And if we ſurvey his Conduct towards Mankind from the Beginning, we may in ten Thouſand Inſtances, ſee the infinite Goodneſs of his Nature diſplay'd. If we conſider what

what his Ways have been towards an apostate World, how he has given his Son to be a Redeemer, and his Spirit to be a Sanctifier, how he has sent all his Servants the Prophets, rising early and sending; and that notwithstanding he knew before-hand what Treatment he should meet with from a guilty, ungrateful, God-hating World, how they would murder his Son, resist his Spirit, and kill his Messengers: if we consider how patient and forbearing and long-suffering he has been towards obstinate Sinners, how loth to give them over, swearing by himself that he delights not in their Death, but rather that they turn and live; even while they have contemned and affronted him in the vilest Manner: and if we consider his distinguishing Favours towards his Elect, and the marvellous Things which he has wrought for his Church and People; I say, if we consider these Things, and at the same Time, look round the World and behold the innumerable common Favours strewed abroad among guilty, Hell-deserving Rebels, we must be forced to own, that he is good to all, and that his tender Mercies are over all his Works. And the great Governour of the World evidently appears to be a Being of infinite Goodness.

His Goodness is as unbounded as his Power. There is no Act of Kindness, which his Omnipotency is able to do, but that there is Goodness enough in his Heart, to prompt him to do it, if all Things considered, it be best to be done. His Propensity to do Good is fully equal to his Ability. All the Treasures and good Things of this lower World are his, and he gives all to the Children of Men, and we should have enjoyed all without the least Sorrow intermixed, had not our Sin & Apostacy made it necessary for him to give some Testimony of his Displeasure: and yet even the Calamities of Life are well adapted in our present State to do us Good.—All the Treasures & Glories of Heaven are his, and he offers all to a guilty World, and actually gives all to such as are willing to accept of all, thro' the Mediator, in the Way prescribed. — And what can he give more? Can he give his only begotten Son to die for Sinners? Behold he has a Heart to do it! Can he give his holy Spirit to recover poor Sinners to God? Be-

hold he has a Heart to do it! is as ready to give his holy Spirit to them that aſk, as Parents be to give Bread to their Children! And finally, can he in any Senſe give Himſelf to his Creatures? Behold he is willing to do ſo, to be their God and Father and Portion, and be all Things to them, and do all Things for them, if they will but accept of him thrô Jeſus Chriſt! So that, as I ſaid, his Propenſity to do Good is fully equal to his Ability. And there is no doubt, but that he does ſhew all thoſe Kindneſſes to his intelligent Creatures, which, all Things conſidered, are beſt ſhould be ſhewn. And his Underſtanding is infinite, whereby he is able to determine exactly what is beſt in the whole. *Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the Heavens; and thy Faithfulneſs reacheth unto the Clouds. How excellent is thy loving Kindneſs, O God! Therefore the Children of Men put their Truſt under the Shadow of thy Wings.* Pſal. 36. 5, 7.

And ſuch is the Goodneſs of his Nature, and ſo much Goodneſs has he in his Heart, that he needs no Motive to excite him to do Good: *i. e.* Nothing from without. Thus unmoved & unexcited by any Thing from without himſelf, of his own mere Goodneſs, he did, in the Days of Eternity, determine to do all that Good, which ever will by him be done, to all Eternity, when there was nothing exiſting but himſelf, and ſo nothing to move him but his own good Pleaſure.—Yea, ſuch is the Goodneſs of his Nature, that he not only needs no Motive from without to excite him to do Good; but even then, when there are all Things to the contrary, even every Thing in his Creatures to render them ill-deſerving, and to diſcourage and hinder his ſhewing Mercy, and to provoke him to Wrath; even then, when Diſcouragements are infinitely great, and Provocations are innumerable; yea, when there is nothing in his Creature but what is of the Nature of a Provocation: even, in ſuch a Caſe, he can ſhew Mercy; yea, the greateſt of Mercies. He can give his Son to die for ſuch, and his holy Spirit to ſanctify them, and himſelf at laſt to be their God & Father and everlaſting Portion. Such is the incomparable Goodneſs of his Nature. *Who is a God like unto Thee!* &c. *Mic.* 7. 18, 19. — But then he is at his Liberty, in ſuch Caſes, and may act according to his own Diſcretion, and have Mercy

Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and have Compassion on whom he will have Compassion. And truly it is infinitely fit he should. To act sovereignly, in such Cases, is infinitely becoming.—And indeed, it is fit he should dispense all his Favours according to his sovereign Pleasure. It is fit he should do what he will with his own. He knows best how to exercise his own Goodness, and it is perfectly fit that he should be at Liberty, and act according to his own Discretion, according to the Counsel of his own Will. And because it is infinitely fit, therefore he actually does so, *Eph.* 1. 11. He passed by the Angels that sinned, and pitied sinful Men; he passed by the rest of the World, and chose the Seed of *Abraham*; he suffers Thousands of Sinners to go on in their Sins and perish, and in the mean Time, seizes here and there one, by his All-conquering Grace, and effectually saves them: and all according to his sovereign Pleasure, because it seems good in his Sight so to do. And the Reason why he acts sovereignly, is because in the Nature of Things it is fit he should. Therefore his Sovereignty is a holy, & so a glorious Sovereignty. Hence when *Moses* desired to see *his Glory*, he discovered *this* unto him, *Exod.* 33. 12. And because our Saviour saw how fit and becoming it was for God to act as a Sovereign in bestowing his Favours, therefore he saw a Glory in his Sovereignty, and so *rejoyced* in it. *Mat.* 11. 25, 26. And sovereign Grace is glorious Grace in the Eyes of every one, who views Things aright, and have right Frames of Heart. — Considering that *all* God has is *his own*, that he knows infinitely the best what to do *with what he has*, that there can be *no Motive from without* to excite him to act, it is infinitely fit he should be left to himself, to act according to his own Discretion; and it is infinite Impudence for a Worm of the Dust to intermeddle, or go about to direct the almighty and infinitely wise God. And it is infinite Wickedness to dislike his Conduct, and find Fault with his Dispensations.

Indeed, if there was nothing of greater Worth and Importance than the Happiness of his Creatures & Subjects, and so nothing that he ought to have a greater Regard to and Concern for, then it is not to be supposed that any of

his Creatures and Subjects would be finally miserable.—The infinitely good Governour of the World has a great Regard to the Happiness of his Subjects, their Welfare is very dear to him, and their Misery, in it self, or for it's own Sake, very undesireable in his Sight; yet he has so much greater Regard to something else, that in some Instances he actually does suffer Sinners to go on in their Sins and perish for ever; yea, and he will inflict the eternal Torments of Hell upon them.—The Goodness of God is a holy, wise and rational Goodness, and not an unreasonable Fondness. He will never do a wrongThing, to oblige any of his Creatures: No, he had rather the whole World should be damned; yea, that even his own Son should die. Nor will he ever communicate Good to any one, when all Things considered, it is not best & wisest. When he first designed to create the World, and first laid out his whole Scheme of Government, as it was easy for him to have determined, that neither Angels nor Men should ever sin, and that Misery should never be heard of in all his Dominions; so he could easily have prevented both Sin & Misery. Why didn't he? Surely, not for want of Goodness in his Nature; for that is infinite: Not from any Thing like Cruelty; for there is no such Thing in him: Not for want of a suitable Regard to the Happiness of his Creatures; for that he always has: But it was, because in his infinite Wisdom he did not think it best in the whole. It was not because he had not sufficient Power to preserve Angels & Men all holy and happy; for it is certain he had. It was not because preventing Grace would have been inconsistent with their being free Agents; for it would not. It was not because he did not thoroughly consider & weigh the Thing with all its Consequences; for it is certain he did. But upon the whole, all Things considered, he judg'd it best, to permit the Angels to sin and Man to fall; and so let Misery enter into his Dominions. It did not come to pass accidentally & unawares, and contrary to what God had ever thought of, or intended; because it is certain, that he knew all Things from the Beginning: and it is certain, that in an Affair of such a Nature and of such Consequence, he could not stand by as

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an idle, unconcerned Spectator, that cares not which Way Things go. There is no doubt therefore, but that all Things considered, he thought it best to permit Things to come to pass just as they did. And if he thought it best, it was best; for his Understanding is infinite; his Wisdom unerring, and so he can never be mistaken. —— But why was it best? What could he have in View, preferable to the Happiness of his Creatures? And if their Happiness was to him above all Things most dear; how could he bear the Thoughts of their ever (any of them) being miserable?—Why, — it is certain he thought it best, and therefore it is certain he had a View to something else besides merely the Happiness of his Creatures, to something of greater Importance, and more worthy to bear a governing Sway in his Mind, by which it became him to be above all Things influenced, in laying out & contriving, how Things should proceed and be disposed in the World he designed to create.—But what was that Thing, which was of greater Worth & Importance, and so more worthy to bear a governing Sway in his Mind, and to which he had the greatest Regard, making all other Things give Way to this? What was his *grand End* in creating & governing the World? Why, look — what End he is at last like to obtain, when the whole Scheme is finished, and the Day of Judgment past, & Heaven & Hell filled with all their proper Inhabitants. And what will be the final Result? What will he get by all? — Why, in all he will exert and display every one of his Perfections to the Life, and so by all will exhibit a most perfect and exact Image of himself. And now, as he is infinitely glorious in being what he is, therefore that Scheme of Conduct which is perfectly suited, to exhibit the most lively and exact Image of him, must be infinitely glorious too. And therefore this is the greatest and best Thing he can aim at in all his Works: and this therefore ought to be his *last End*. Now it is evident, that the Fall of the Angels and of Man, together with all those Things which have and will come to pass in Consequence thereof, and occasioned thereby, from the beginning of the World to the Day of Judgment, and throughout Eternity, will serve to give a much more lively

and perfect Representation of God, than could possibly have been exhibited, had there never been any Sin or Misery. The Holiness and Justice, the Goodness, Mercy and Grace of God shine much more bright. They have been with an astonishing Lustre and Glory, displayed in the Death of Christ, and will be displayed forever in Heaven and in Hell, as they could not have been, had not Sin and Misery ever been permitted to enter into God's World.——Indeed, if in the Nature of Things, it had been wrong for God to have permitted any of his Creatures to sin, and then to punish them for it; if God had been bound in Duty, or in Goodness, to keep them from Sin, or to save them when they had sinned; then the Case had been otherwise. But since, in the Nature of Things, it was fit he should be at Liberty, and act according to his own Discretion; and since the End he had in View, was so noble and God-like; therefore his Conduct in this Affair was infinitely right, fit and becoming, and so infinitely glorious. Certainly, God thought it was so, or he would not have done as he did. And therefore if we view Things as God did, and have a Temper & Frame of Heart like unto his, we shall think so too. And, as I said before, it is horrid Pride & Impudence for us to pretend to know better than the infinitely wise God, and infinite Wickedness for us to pretend to find Fault with his Conduct. *Rom.* 9. 19—23. * Thus, if he had aimed merely at the Happiness of his Creatures, he could easily have

* Object. But surely it could not be consistent with the divine Goodness, from all Eternity, to decree the everlasting Misery of his Creatures.

Answ. God has in Fact permitted Sin to enter into the World, does in Fact permit many to die in their Sins, will in Fact punish them for ever; and *all* consistent with the infinite Goodness of his Nature, as every one must acknowledge. And since it is consistent with his Goodness to *do as he does*, it was consistent with his Goodness to *determine* with himself before-hand to *do so*:--- What God, *from Eternity*, decreed to *do*; that God, *in Time*, will *do*: therefore if *all* God's *Conduct* be holy, just, and good, so also are *all* his *Decrees*. Unless we can suppose it to be *wrong*, for the infinitely wise God, from all Eternity, to *determine* upon a *Conduct* in all Respects *right*: than which nothing can be more absurd.

have so ordered, that *Pharaoh* should willingly have let *Israel* go, and he could have led *Israel* in less than forty Days to the promised Land, and put them in an immediate Possession. But there was something else which he had a greater Regard to: And therefore *Pharaoh*'s Heart is hardened, and all his Wonders are wrought in the Land of *Egypt*. The Tribes of *Israel* march to the Borders of the *Red-Sea*, the Sea parts, *Israel* goes thro', but the *Egyptians* are drowned. And now *Israel* is tempted & tried, and they sin and rebel, and so are doomed to wander forty Years in the Wilderness, and to have their Carcases fall there. And why was all this? Why — because his Design was to display all his Perfections, and fill the whole Earth with his Glory. *Exod.*9.16. *Numb.*14.21. And now, because it is the most noble Thing that God can have in View, to act forth all his Perfections to the Life, and so exhibit the most exact Representation of himself in his Works; therefore it is infinitely fit he should make this his last End, and all other Things subservient; and his Conduct in so doing is infinitely beautiful & glorious.— Thus we see how the Goodness of God is displayed in his Government of the World; & see that it is an unbounded, rich, free Goodness; and that all the Exercises of it are sovereign, and under the Direction of his infinite Wisdom: so that God is infinitely glorious on the Account of this Perfection of his Nature. *Exod.* 33. 19. & 34. 5, 6, 7. *Rom.* 9. *Eph.* 1. 1——12.

(7.) *His unchangeable Truth and Faithfulness*, is also discovered in his Government of the World; and that in the Fulfilment of his Promises, and the Execution of his Threatnings. Did he promise to be *Abraham*'s God? So he was. Did he promise to give the Land of *Canaan* to his Seed for an Inheritance? So he did. Did he promise to send his Son into the World, and to set him up a Kingdom upon Earth? Even so he has done. And he is in like Manner true and faithful to all his Promises, which he has made to his People.—And did he threaten to drown the old World, to make *Israel* wander forty Years in the Wilderness, to deliver them into the Hands of their Enemies, at what Time soever they should forsake him, and

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go and serve other Gods, and finally to send them Captives into *Babylon* for seventy Years? Even so he has done. God's Word may always be depended upon: for what he designs, that he says; and what he says, that he will do. And this is another of the glorious Perfections of his Nature.

Thus all the Perfections of God are discovered in his Government of the World. By his *Conduct* we may see what he *is*, and learn the very Temper of his Heart.—— And now, I might go thro' his other Works, His redeeming, justifying, sanctifying Sinners, and bringing them to eternal Glory at last, and shew how his glorious Perfections shine forth in them. But I have already hinted at some of these Things, and shall have Occasion afterwards to view the divine Perfections shining forth in these Works of God, when I come to consider the Nature of the Gospel. Sufficient has been said to answer my present Purpose; and therefore forBrevity's Sake, I will proceed no further here.— Thus then we see, how the Perfections of God are manifested in his *Works*.

Secondly. *The same Representation is made of God in his* Word. For these great Works of God, his creating, preserving & governing the World, his redeeming, sanctifying and saving of Sinners, are the Subject-Matter of all the Bible. God in his Works acts out his Perfections, and in his Word lays the whole before our Eyes in Writing. Therein he has told us what he has done, and what he intends to do; and so has delineated his glorious Perfections in the plainest Manner. — In his *Word*, God has *revealed himself* to the Children of Men, has manifested and shewn what he *is*. But how? Why, by declaring and holding forth his Works, as that, in which he has exhibited the Image of himself. Thus, the Scriptures begin with an Account of God's creating the World, and goes on throughout all the old Testament informing, how he preserves & governs it. And then in the New-Testament we are informed more particularly how he redeems, justifies, sanctifies, and saves Sinners. And now, as the Actions of a Man discover the Temper & Disposition of his Heart, and shew what he is; so the Works of God from first to last,

last, all taken together, hold forth an exact Representation of himself. If we will begin with God's creating the World, and survey all his Conduct in the Light of Scripture; his Conduct towards Man before the Fall, and after the Fall, his Conduct towards *Abel* and *Cain*, *Enoch* and *Noah*, and all the old World, his Conduct towards *Lot* and *Sodom*, towards *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and *Joseph*, towards the Children of *Israel*, in *Egypt*, at the *Red-Sea*, in the *Wilderness*, at *Sinai*, at *Massah*, at *Taberah*, &c. and in the Times of *Joshua*, of their Judges, of their Kings, &c. And then come into the New Testament, and survey his Conduct with Relation to the Redemption & Salvation of Sinners, and then look forward to the great Judgment-Day, and see his whole Scheme finished, see the Result, the Conclusion and End of all; look up to Heaven and take a View of that World, and look down to Hell and survey the State of Things there; from the whole we may see WHAT GOD IS: for in the whole, God exerts his Nature, and by the whole God designs to exhibit an exact Representation of *Himself*. And then are our Apprehensions of God *right* and according to *Truth*, when we take in that very Representation which he has made of himself. And now to account him infinitely glorious in being what he is, and to *love him with all our Hearts*, because he is what he is, is the very Thing which the Law of God requires.

And indeed, so plain is that Representation which God has made of himself by his Works and in his Word; and he is *really* so infinitely glorious in being what he is, that were not Mankind, thrô their exceeding great Depravity, intirely void of a right *Taste* and *Relish* for *true Beauty*, they could not but be even ravished with the divine Being. They would naturally feel as they do in Heaven, and naturally speak their Language, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts; the whole Earth is full of his Glory!* (*Isai.* 6. 3.) But such is the vile Temper of sinful apostate Creatures, that they are not only blind to the moral Excellency of the divine Nature, but are even in a stated, habitual Contrariety to God in the Frame of their Hearts. (*Rom.* 8. 7.) And hence, the Manifestation which God has made of Himself, can find no Place in their Hearts. (*Joh.* 8. 37.) They can-

cannot attend to Things of such a Nature (*ver.* 43.) because so disagreable to their Taste. For (*ver.* 47.) *He that is of God, heareth God's Words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.* 'Tis hard, to bring unregenerate Men so much as to have right Notions of what God is, because he is a Being in his Nature so contrary & disagreable to them. They do not *like to retain God in their Knowledge.* (*Rom.* 1. 28.) Men had rather that God was another Kind of a Being, different from what he really is, and more like themselves, one that would suit their Temper, and serve their Interest; and therefore they frame such a one in their own Fancy, and then fall down and worship the false Image which they have set up. From hence it is, that all those false Notions of God have taken their Rise, which have always filled the World.—But were Men brought to have right Notions of what God is, and to take in that very Representation, which he has made of Himself, by his Works and in his Word; yet they would be so far from accounting him infinitely *glorious* in being what he is, that they would see *no Form or Comeliness in him wherefore they should desire him:* But would feel the like malignant Spirit towards him, as the *Jews* did towards their Prophets, and towards Christ and his Apostles; only in a worse Degree. The same Temper which caused the Exercise of such Enmity towards their Prophets, and towards Christ and his Apostles, would have caused as great or greater towards God himself, had they but had right Notions of him. And the clearer Apprehensions a Sinner has of God, the more will his Enmity exert itself; because a sinful Nature and a holy Nature are diametrically opposite to each other. And therefore the clearest external Revelation of God cannot bring Sinners to love him. All the World will see just what a Kind of a Being he is at the Day of Judgment, and that in a very plain and clear manner: But yet they whose Nature it is to hate him for being what he is, will hate him still; yea, hate him more than ever. And therefore, besides the external Revelation which God has made of himself by his Works and in his Word, there is an absolute Necessity that he should internally reveal himself in his Glory to the Heart

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of a Sinner, in order to beget divine Love there. Which brings me to add,

Thirdly, *God reveals his infinite Glory, in being what he is, in the Hearts of Sinners, by his holy* SPIRIT. *Mat.* 11. 25,—27.—— By his Works and in his Word he has revealed *what he is*, and that in a Manner sufficiently plain, even so plainly, that there is no Need at all of any further objective Revelation: and he is *really infinitely glorious* in being what he is. Now therefore if we would rightly attend to that Revelation which God has made of Himself, we could not but have right Apprehensions of Him; and if we had a good Taste for true Beauty, we could not but be ravished with his Glory: but we are naturally disinclined to right Apprehensions of God, and are entirely destitute of a true Taste for moral Beauty. And hence we may learn what Kind of inward Illumination we stand in Need of from the Spirit of God.—— We do not need the holy Spirit to reveal any *new Truths* concerning God, not already revealed; for the external Revelation which he has made of himself, is *sufficiently full.*—— We do not need to have the holy Spirit immediately reveal all these Truths concerning God *over again* to us, by Way of *objective Revelation*, or immediate Inspiration; because the external Revelation already made is *sufficiently plain.*—We only need (1.) to be effectually awakened, to attend to those Manifestations which he has made of himself in his Works and Word, that we may *see what he is:* And (2.) to have a *spiritual Taste* imparted to us, by the immediate Influence of the Holy Ghost, that we may have *a Sense of his infinite Glory in being such:* For these two will lay an effectual Foundation in our Hearts for that *Love*, which the Law requires.— By the common Influences of the Spirit, we may be awakened to a realizing Sight and Sense of *what* GOD *is*; and by the special and sanctifying Influences of the Spirit, we may receive a Sense of his infinite *Glory* in being such. And also the Sense of his *Glory* will naturally cause us to see more clearly what God *is:* for a Sense of the moral Excellency of the divine Nature fixes our Thoughts on God, and the more our Thoughts are fixed, the more distinctly we see what he is. And while we see him to be what he is, and see his

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infinite Glory in being such, hereby a divine Love is naturally enkindled in our Hearts. And thus, *He that commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, shines in our Hearts, and gives us the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God:* And so *we all with open Face, behold as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same Image.* (2. *Cor.* 3. 18. and 4. 6.)— A Sight of the moral Excellency of the divine Nature makes God appear infinitely glorious in every Respect. Those Things in God, which before appeared exceeding dreadful, now appear unspeakably glorious. His Sovereignty appears glorious, because now we see he is fit to be a Sovereign, and that it is fit and right he should do what he will with his own. His Justice appears glorious, because now we see the infinite Evil of Sin. And a Consideration of his infinite Understanding and almighty Power, enhances his Glory. And while we view what he is, and see his Greatness and Glory, and consider his original, entire, underived Right to all Things, we begin to see why he assumes the Character of most high God, supreme Lord, and sovereign Governour of the whole World; and we resign the Throne to him, and take our Places, and become his willing Subjects, and our Hearts are framed to love him and fear him and trust in him thro' Jesus Christ, and we give up our selves to him, to walk in all his Ways & keep all his Commands, seeking his Glory. And thus a Sight and Sense of the infinite Dignity, Greatness, Glory and Excellency of the most high God, lays the first Foundation for a divine Love. God's being what he is, is the primary Reason that he requires us to *love him with all our Hearts*; and it is the first Motive of a genuine Love.

I might now pass on to consider the *additional Obligations* we are under to love God; but that it may be profitable to stop a while, and a little consider the Nature and Properties of this *first and greatest* and *most fundamental Obligation*; and take a View of some *important Consequences* necessarily following therefrom. And here,

1. This Obligation is binding *antecedently* to any Consideration of *Advantage* or *Disadvantage*, of *Rewards* or *Punishments*; and even prior to any Consideration of *the positive Will and Law of God himself.*

2. It

2. It is *infinitely* binding.
3. It is *eternally* binding.
4. It is *unchangeably* binding.
5. It is that from which all *other* Obligations *originally derive* their binding Nature.

1. This Obligation, which we are under to *love God with all our Hearts*, resulting from the infinite Excellency of the divine Nature, is binding *antecedently to any Consideration of Advantage or Disadvantage, of Rewards or Punishments, or even of the positive Will and Law of God himself.*— To love God with all our Hearts naturally tends to make us happy; and the contrary, to make us miserable; and there are glorious Rewards promised on the one Hand, & dreadful Punishments threatned on the other; and God, as Governour of the World, has with all his Authority by his Law expressly required us to love him with all our Hearts, and forbidden the contrary: and all these Things are binding: but yet the infinite Excellency of the divine Nature lays us under Bonds *prior* to any Consideration of these Things. So that if our Interest did not at all lie at Stake, and if there had never been any express Law in the Case, yet it would be right, and our indispensable Duty, to love God with all our Hearts. His being infinitely lovely in Himself, makes it our Duty to love Him. For he is in himself worthy of our highest Esteem; he deserves it; it is in the Nature of Things his Due: and that antecedent to any selfish Consideration, or any express Law in the Case. To suppose the contrary, is to deny the infinite Amiableness of the divine Nature, and to take away the very Foundation of the Law it self, and the very Reason of all Rewards and Punishments. For if our supreme Love is not due to God, then he is not infinitely lovely; and if he does not deserve to be loved with all our Hearts, why does he require it? And if in the Nature of Things it is not right and fit that we should love Him, and the contrary unfit and wrong, what Grounds are there for Rewards or Punishments? So that it is evident, the infinite Excellency of the divine Nature binds us, and makes it our Duty, antecedent to any Consideration of Advantage or Disadvantage, Rewards or Punishments, or even of the positive Will and Law of God, to love God with all

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our Hearts; and therefore our Love must primarily take its Rise from a Sense of this infinite Excellency of the divine Nature, as has been before observed; and that seeming Love, which arises meerly from selfish Considerations, from the Fear of Punishment or Hope of Reward, or because the Law requires it, and so 'tis a Duty and must be done, is not genuine: But is a selfish, a mercenary, and a forced Thing. How evidently therefore do those discover their Hypocrisy, who are wont to talk after the following Manner? "If I am elected, I shall be saved, let me do what "I will; and if I am not elected, I shall be damned, let "me do what I can: And therefore it is no Matter how "I live." And again after this Sort "If I knew certain- "ly that God had made no Promises to the Duties of the "Unregenerate, as some pretend, I would never do any "more in Religion." Surely they had as good say, that they have no Regard at all to the infinite Excellency of the divine Nature, but are intirely influenced by selfish and mercenary Motives in all they do. They don't seem to understand that they are under infinite Obligations to love God with all their Hearts and obey him in every Thing, resulting from God's being what he is, and that antecedent to all selfish Considerations. Such know not God. (1 *Joh.* 3. 6)

2. This Obligation resulting from the intrinsick Excellency and Amiableness of the divine Nature, is *infinitely binding:* Because this Excellency and Amiableness is in it self infinite. Our Obligation arises from his Desert; but he infinitely deserves our Love, because he is infinitely lovely. When any Person is lovely and honourable, Reason teaches us, that we ought to love and honour Him; and that it is wrong, to dislike and despise Him. And the more lovely and honourable, the greater is our Obligation to love and honour him; and the more aggravatedly vile is it, to treat him with Contempt. Since therefore God is a Being of infinite Dignity, Greatness, Glory and Excellency, hence we are under an infinite Obligation to love him with all our Hearts; and it is infinitely wrong, not to do so. Since he is infinitely worthy to be honoured and obeyed by us, therefore we are under an infinite Obligation to honour & obey Him: And that with all our Heart & Soul, and Mind and Strength. Hence, [1.]

[1] *Perfect Love and perfect Obedience deserve no Thanks at his Hands.* If we perfectly love him, even with all our Hearts; and give up our selves entirely and for ever to him, to do his Will and seek his Glory; and so cordially delight in him, as to take up our full and everlasting Contentment in him; yet in all this, we do but our Duty: and we do no more than what we are under an infinite Obligation to do. And therefore we deserve no Thanks. (*Luk.* 17. 9,10.) Yea, we do nothing but that in which consists our highest Perfection, Glory & Blessedness; and therefore instead of deserving Thanks, we ought to account it an exceeding great Priviledge, that we *may* thus love the Lord, live to him, and live upon him. (*Psal.* 19. 10.)

When therefore eternal Life was promised in the first Covenant, as the *Reward* of perfect Obedience, it was not under the Notion of any Thing being *merited*; nor did it ever enter into the Hearts of the Angels in Heaven to imagine, they merited any Thing by all their Love and Service: for from their very Hearts they all join to say, *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Praise for ever.* And they deserve no Thanks for their doing so; for they but own the very Truth.

When therefore sinful Men, poor Hell-deserving Creatures, think it MUCH, that they should love and serve God so well, and take so great Pains in Religion; and are ready to think, that God and Man ought highly to value them for their so doing, and are always telling God and Man how MIGHTY Good they are; as he, *Luk.* 18.11,12. *God, I thank thee, I am not as other Men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican*;—No, far from this, I am one of the best Men in all the World, — *I fast twice in the Week, I give Tythes of all that I possess* — This appeared to him such a MIGHTY Thing, that he thought it quite worth while to tell God himself of it:—Now, I say, when this is Men's Temper, it is a Sign they neither know God, nor love him: for if they did, they could not set so *high* a Price upon their Duties, since he is so infinitely deserving.— The plain Truth is, such have intolerable mean

Thoughts of God, and intolerable high Thoughts of themſelves; they are brim-full of ſpiritual Pride & Self-Righteouſneſs: and ſuch are exceeding hateful in the Sight of God. They implicitly ſay, that God is not infinitely glorious, and infinitely worthy of all Love and Honour; he does not deſerve it, it is not his Due; but rather he is beholden to his Creatures for it, and ought to render them many Thanks for their Love & Service. The Language of their Hearts is, *God has ſo little Loveline ſs, that it is* MUCH *to love him.*—Like a bad Mother-in-Law, who thinks it nothing to do all Things for her own Children, becauſe ſhe loves them; but grudges every Step ſhe takes for the reſt, and thinks every little a great deal, becauſe ſhe cares not for them: So ſuch Men think it nothing to riſe early and ſit up late, to get the World, to get Riches, Honour and Pleaſure; for they love themſelves: but think it MUCH to take the tenth Part of the Pains in Religion; becauſe they don't love God. Their whole Frame of Mind caſts infinite Contempt upon the glorious Majeſty of Heaven, to whom all Honour is infinitely due, and in whoſe Service all the Hoſts of Heaven account themſelves perfectly bleſſed: for they, vile Wretches! feel as if they deſerved to be paid for all.

True, there are glorious Rewards promiſed in the Law and in the Goſpel. But why? and upon what Grounds?—A Man may be ſaid to be rewarded in three different Senſes.—(1.) *When he receives what he ſtrictly deſerves, as an Hireling receives his Wages at Night.* But in this Senſe the Angels in Heaven are not capable of a Reward: for in ſtrict Juſtice they deſerve nothing. (*Luk.* 17. 9,10. *Rom.* 11. 35.)— They are no Hirelings, for God has a natural original, underived, entire Right to them; as much as he has to the Sun, Moon and Stars: and theſe therefore deſerve to be paid for their ſhining, as much as the Angels do for their working.—Beſides, if the Angels do love God, it is no more than he infinitely deſerves.—And farther, the Services of Angels do not profit God, and ſo lay him under no Obligations; any more than the Birds profit the riſing Sun by their Morning-Songs, and ſo lay the Sun under Obligations to ſhine all Day. Job 22. 2,3. *Can*

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a Man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any Pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art Righteous? or is it Gain to him, that thou makest thy Ways perfect? And yet even in this gross Sense, Self-righteous Persons feel at Heart, as if they deserved a Reward for their good Duties; tho' perhaps they are not willing to own it. Hence they are so apt to think it would be very hard, unjust and cruel, if God should damn them for their past Sins, notwithstanding all their good Duties. Isai. 58.3. *Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not?*— But, (2.) A Man may be said to be rewarded, when, altho' in strict Justice he deserves nothing, yet *he receives great Favours at the Hands of God in Testimony of the divine Approbation of his Person and Services.* And thus the Angels in Heaven, tho' they deserve nothing, yet have eternal Life bestowed upon them, as a Reward to their perfect Obedience, in Testimony of the divine Approbation. God rewards them, not because they do him any Good, nor because they deserve any Thing at his Hands; but because he infinitely loves *Righteousness*, and to appear as an infinite Friend to *this*, in his publick Conduct, as moral Governour of the World. The most that can be said of the holiest Angel in Heaven, is, that he is fit to be approved in the Sight of God, because he is perfectly such as God requires him to be. And now, because God loves to put Honour upon Vertue, and to exercise the infinite Bountifulness of his Nature, therefore he gives them the Reward of eternal Life. And thus God promised us eternal Life, upon Condition of perfect Obedience, in the first Covenant: as if God had said, "If you will love me with all your "Heart, and obey me in every Thing, as you are bound "in Duty to do; then, altho' you will deserve nothing, "yet as becomes a holy and good God, a kind & bounti-"ful Governour, I will make you everlastingly blessed in "the Enjoyment of myself; and that in Testimony of my "Approbation of your perfect and steady Fidelity." And so by Covenant and Promise this Reward would have been *due*, had the Condition been performed. Hence that in Rom. 4.4. *Now to him that worketh, is the Reward not reckoned of Grace, but of DEBT.* And now here Self-righ-

righteous Persons are wont to come in with their Works, and insist upon their Right, and plead the Reason of Things, as well as the Promise. "If we do (say they) as well as "we can, which is all that God does or can in Justice re- "quire of us, surely he will accept of us: it would be "cruel, to cast us off: his Goodness and Faithfulness are "engaged for us." Just as if they had now made full Amends for all their past Sins by their Repentance and Reformation; and grown to be as good as Angels, by taking some little Pains in Religion! For the best Angel in Heaven does not pretend to any other Title to Blessedness than this; namely, that he has done as well as he can, and that this is all that God has required, and altho' he is an unprofitable Servant, yet he depends upon the Promise, the Goodness and Faithfulness of his Bountiful Creator.——Indeed, Self-righteous Persons may *pretend* to expect all *for Christ's Sake*; and say, that what they do, only entitles them to an Interest in him: But it is all *mere Pretence*; for still they think, that God is *bound* to give them an Interest in Christ and eternal Life, *if they do as well as they can*; and would think God dealt very hardly with them, if he did not. So that their real Dependance, at Bottom, is upon their own Goodness, their own Worth or Worthiness, to make Amends for past Sins, and recommend them to God, and entitle them to all Things; the infinite Absurdity of which will be evident presently.—— Again, (3.) A Man may be said to be rewarded, when he neither deserves any Thing, nor is it fitting that his Person and Conduct, considered *merely* as they be in *themselves*, should be approved; but ought to be condemned, according to Reason, and according to God's righteous Law, they being so sinfully defective; nevertheless such a Man may be said to be rewarded, when *merely* on the Account of his Interest in the *Righteousness* and *Worthiness* of CHRIST, his Person and Performances are accepted, and peculiar Favours shewn him. And in *this Way* are Believers accepted, according to the Covenant of Grace, and entitled to the Reward of eternal Life. (*Phil.* 3. 8, 9. *Eph.* 1. 6. 1 *Pet.* 2. 5.) Now those who look for a Reward in *this Way*, will be so far from thinking it MUCH, which they have done for God, that they will for ever set all down for Nothing,

Nothing & worse than Nothing, * their best Duties being so sinfully defective; and judge themselves worthy of Hell every Day, and every Moment: And all their Dependance will be on Christ's Worthiness, and the free Grace of God thro' Him. (*Luk.* 18. 13. *Rom.* 3. 24.) And all that is said in the New-Testament about God's rewarding the Believers good Works, being viewed in this Light, gives not the least Countenance to a Self-righteous Spirit, but militates directly against it.—— And indeed, if we were as perfect as the Angels in Heaven, it appears from what has been said, that we should deserve no Thanks. It is impudent therefore, and wicked, it is contemptuous, and in a Sort blasphemous, and most God-provoking, for a proud conceited *Pharisee*, to feel as he does in his Self-righteous Frames. And God might expostulate with such a one in this Manner; "What, is there so little Loveliness in me! "And is it so great, so hard, so self-denying, to love me, "that you think it such a *mighty* Thing! and expect now, "that all past Sins shall be forgiven, and my Favour se- "cured, for this good Frame! Yea, and that I shall give "you Heaven into the Bargain! What, are your Obliga- "tions to me so small, that I must be so much beholden to "you for your Love! What, did you never hear that I "was the LORD! And that it was I that stretched abroad "the Heavens! And that you are my Clay, whom I form- "ed and fashioned for my Self! Be gone, thou impudent

 "Wretch

* *Worse than nothing.*——Note. I do not mean, that an imperfect and very defective Conformity to the Law is worse and more odious in God's Sight, than no Conformity at all: but only, that there is more *Odiousness* than *Amiableness* in such defective Services. And that therefore, we are, in the Sight of God, on their Account, more proper Objects of Hatred and Punishment, than of Love and Reward; if considered merely as in our selves, without any Respect to our Relation to Christ: So that in Point of recommending our selves to God, we do, by our best Duties, thus considered, rather discommend ourselves in his Sight. And in this Sense they are *Worse than Nothing:* They are even so far from paying our constant Dues, that, in the Sight of God, they constantly run us into Debt. We are infinitely to blame in our best Frames and best Duties, and have not any Thing in them, which tends, in God's Sight, in the least Degree, to Counterbalance our Blame. --- But if any are desirous to see this Point fully explained and proved, and all Objections answered, I refer them to Mr. *Edwards's* excellent Discourse on *Justification by Faith alone.*

" Wretch, to Hell, thy proper Place: thou art a Deſpiſer " of my glorious Majeſty, and your Frame of Spirit ſavours " of Blaſphemy. Know it, I am not ſo mean, as you ima- " gine, nor at all beholden to you for your Love.' 'And this is one Reaſon that *the Sacrifice of the Wicked* is ſuch an *Abomination to the Lord*; not only when they pray with a View to recommend themſelves to their Fellow-Men; but alſo when in doing their beſt, they only deſign to ingratiate themſelves with God. Prov. 21. 27. *The Sacrifice of the Wicked is Abomination* (even his very beſt) *How much more when he bringeth it with a wicked Mind?* The infinite Greatneſs, Glory and Excellency of God, and the infinite Obligation thence reſulting which we are under to love him with all our Hearts and obey him in every Thing, renders a Self-righteous Spirit, unſpeakably odious and infinitely provoking in the Eyes of a holy God. But this will appear ſtill plainer under the next particular. To proceed therefore,

[2.] If we are under an infinite Obligation to love God ſupremely, live to him ultimately, and take everlaſting Delight in him, becauſe of his infinite Glory and Excellency, then *the leaſt Diſpoſition* to diſeſteem him, to be indifferent about his Intereſt and Honour, or to diſreliſh Communion with him; or *the leaſt Diſpoſition* to love our ſelves more than God, and be more concerned about our Intereſt and Honour, than about his, and to be pleaſed and delighted in the Things of the World, more than in him, *muſt* conſequently be *infinitely ſinful*, * as is ſelf-evident.

When therefore the great Governour of the World threatens eternal Damnation for the leaſt Sin, (as in *Gal.* 3. 10.) he does the Thing that is perfectly *Right*: for an infinite Evil deſerves an infinite Puniſhment.

Hence alſo, it is no Wonder that the holieſt Saint on Earth mourns ſo bitterly, and loaths and abhors himſelf ſo exceedingly,

* The leaſt Sin may be an infinite Evil, becauſe of the infinite Obligation we are under to do otherwiſe; and yet all Sins not be equally heinous: For there is as great a Difference among Infinites, as among Finites; I mean, among Things that are infinite only in one Reſpect. For Inſtance, to be for ever in Hell is an infinite Evil, in Reſpect of the Duration; but yet the Damned are not all equally miſerable. Some may be an hundred Times as miſerable as others, in Degree; altho' the Miſery of all is equal in Point of Duration.

exceedingly, for the remaining Corruptions of his Heart. For if the least Disposition to depart from God and disrelish Communion with him, and to be careless about his Honour and Interest, is infinitely sinful; then the best Men that ever lived, have infinite Reason always to lie as in the Dust, and have their Hearts broken. Although it be so with them, that all which the World calls *good* and *great*, appears as Dross to them; and it is nothing to them, to part with Friends and Estate, Honour and Ease, and all, for Christ; and although they have actually suffered the Loss of all Things, and do count them but Dung, not worth mourning about, or repining after: Yet notwithstanding all these Attainments, attended with the fullest Assurance of eternal Glory in the World to come, they have infinite Reason to do as they do, to dislike themselves, to hate themselves, and lie down in the Dust *all in Tears*; because still there is such a remaining Disposition in their Hearts to disesteem the Lord of Glory, to neglect his Interest, and depart from him; and because they are so far from being what they ought to be, notwithstanding the Obligations lying upon them are infinite.——Oh, this is infinitely vile and abominable, and they have Reason indeed therefore always to loath & abhor themselves, and repent in Dust and Ashes: Yea, they are infinitely to blame for not being more humble & penitent.—A Sight and Sense of these Things made *Job* lie down in the Dust, and mourn so bitterly for his Impatience under his past Afflictions, tho' he had been the most patient Man in the World. (*Job* 42. 5, 6.) This made the *Psalmist* call himself a *Beast*. (*Psal.* 73. 22.) And hence *Paul* called himself the *chief of Sinners*; and cried out, *I am carnal, sold under Sin*; *O wretched Man that I am!* And hated to commend himself when the *Corinthians* drove him to it, and seemed to Blush at every Sentence, and in a Sort recalled his Words,—— *I am not a whit behind the very chief of the Apostles, yet I am nothing*; *I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I.*—— Such a Sight of Things kills a Self-righteous Spirit at Root, in the most exalted Saint: for he has nothing (all Things considered) to make a Righteousness of, but in strict Justice merits eternal Damnation every Hour, and does nothing to make the least Amends.

For, if perfect Obedience merits no thanks, as was before obſerved; and if the leaſt Sin is an infinite Evil, and deſerves an infinite Puniſhment, as we have now ſeen; then a whole Eternity of perfect Obedience would do juſt nothing towards making the leaſt Amends for the ſmalleſt Sin; much leſs will the beſt Services of the higheſt Saint on Earth. And conſequently when *Paul* came to die, he deſerved to be damned (conſidered merely as in *himſelf*) as much as when he was a bloody Perſecutor, breathing out Threatnings and Slaughter, yea, and a great deal more too. For all his Diligence and Zeal in the Service of Chriſt, did juſt nothing towards making the leaſt Amends for what was paſt; and his daily Short-comings and ſinful Defects run him daily infinitely more & more into Debt; which he did nothing to Counterbalance. And hence *Paul* accounts himſelf to be *Nothing*, (2 *Cor.* 12. 11.) as well he might; and all his Attainments to be in a Senſe not worth remembring, (*Phil.* 3. 13.) and looks upon himſelf the *chief of Sinners*, (1 *Tim.* 1. 15.) and *leſs than the leaſt of all Saints* (Eph. 3. 8.) and durſt venture his Soul upon nothing but mere free Grace thro' Jeſus Chriſt. (*Phil.* 3. 8, 9.) And hence, thus it is with every Believer, even the moſt holy; altho' he daily ſees what a God he has ſinned againſt, how he has ſinned againſt him, and does from a gracious Reſpect to God mourn for Sin, for all Sin, as the greateſt Evil, and ſincerely turns from all to the Lord, and gives up himſelf to God, to love him and live to him for ever; yet he feels that all this makes *no Amends* at all for his *Sins*, but that he really deſerves to be damned for them as much as ever: Yea, he feels that he is infinitely blame-worthy for not being more humble and penitent and ſelf-abhorring, and that ſo his Deſert of Damnation is infinitely increaſing continually. And hence he looks upon the Grace that ſaves him as abſolutely and divinely free, and infinitely great; and always derives all his Hopes of Happineſs from the free Grace of God thro' Jeſus Chriſt. And this is what the Apoſtle means, when he ſpeaks of *his living by the Faith of the Son of God*, (Gal. 2. 20.) of *his rejoycing in Chriſt Jeſus, and having no Confidence in the Fleſh.* (Phil. 3. 3.) And this was the Cauſe of his ſo earneſtly longing to be *found*, not in himſelf

himself, but *in Christ*; *not having on his own Righteousness, but the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.* (Phil. 3. 8, 9.)— How directly contrary to all this, is the Temper of the blind conceited *Pharisee*, as expressed by *Maimonides*, the *Jew*, who was professedly one of that Sect? "Every Man (says "he) hath his Sins, and every Man his Merits: And he "that hath more Merits than Sins, is a just Man; but he "that hath more Sins than Merits, is a wicked Man." And this is the Way of such Men: They put their Sins, as it were, into one Scale, and their good Duties into the other; and when they fancy their Goodness out-weighs their Badness, then they look upon themselves in the Favour of God.—

But to return,

From what has been said we may learn, that the *more sensible* any Man is of the infinite Glory and Excellency of God, and of his infinite Obligations thence resulting to love God with all his Heart, and obey him in every Thing, the *clearer* will he see that perfect Obedience deserves no Thanks, and that the least Sin is an infinite Evil and deserves an infinite Punishment; and so he will renounce his own Righteousness, die to himself, and come down to nothing, more and more: And so will be proportionably more and more sensible of his absolute Need of Christ & free Grace: And hence the more holy a Man grows, the more humble will he be.—— And on the contrary, the *more insensible* a Man is of God's infinite Glory and Excellency, and of his Obligations thence resulting, the more will he value his Duties, and the less Evil will he see in Sin, and the less sensible will he be of his ill Desert, and of his Need of Christ and free Grace. And hence a self-righteous, impenitent, Christ-despising Spirit reigns in all who *know not God.*—— And thus we see some of the Consequences necessarily following from that infinite Obligation to love God with all our Hearts, which we are under, resulting from the infinite Glory and Excellency of the divine Nature.— But to pass on,

3. This Obligation we are under to love God with all our Hearts, arising from his infinite Glory and Excellency, is in the Nature of Things *eternally* binding. God, his Being, Perfections, and Glory will be eternal; God will always be infinitely amiable; always as amiable as he is now. And

there

there will be always therefore the *same Reason* that he should be loved, for being what he is; even the *very same Reason* that there is now.—— This Obligation is therefore perpetually binding amidst all the Changes of this Life. Whether we are sick or well, in Prosperity or in Adversity; whether we are raised to Honour with *David*, or live in Affluence with *Solomon*; or whether we are in Prison with *Joseph*, or on the Dunghill with *Job*, or wandring about in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented, with those mentioned in the *Eleventh* to the *Hebrews*; still this Obligation upon us to love God is invariably the same. For God is always infinitely amiable in himself; yea and always will be so, whether we are in the Earth, or in Heaven, or in Hell. And therefore it always is and always will be our indispensable Duty to love him with all our Hearts, let what will become of us; and let our Circumstances, as to Happiness and Misery, be what they will.

Did our Obligations to love God, arise *merely* from a Consideration of *something else* besides the *eternal Excellency* of the divine Nature, from something which might *altogether cease* in Time, then might it possibly some Time or other *cease* to be our *Duty* to love God with all our Hearts: But assuredly it can never *cease*, until God *ceases* to be what he is. The infinite Obligation hence arising will be *eternally Binding*.—Indeed if all our Obligations to love God did arise merely from some selfish Considerations, then in Hell, where these selfish Considerations will cease, it would cease to be a Duty to love God. If I were obliged to love God, only because he loves me, is kind to me, and designs to make me happy; then when he ceases to love me, to be kind to me, and to intend my Happiness, all my Obligations to him would cease; and it would be no Sin, not to love him. But now, since our Obligations to love God, arise originally from his being what he is in himself, antecedent to all selfish Considerations; therefore it will for ever remain our Duty to love him, let our Circumstances, as to Happiness or Misery, be what they will: And not to love him with all our Hearts, will for ever be infinitely Wrong. Hence the Guilt of the fallen Angels has been increasing ever since their first Apostacy; and the Guilt of all the Damned will be

be increasing to all Eternity: And no Doubt their Punishment will increase in the same Proportion. How inconceivably and infinitely dreadful, therefore, will be their Case, who are thus continually sinking deeper and deeper in that *bottomless Pit* of Wo and Misery! And indeed, if this be the Case, Hell may well be compared, as it is in Scripture, to a *Bottomless Pit*. Rev. 9. 1. & 20. 1.

4. This Obligation which we are under to love God with all our Hearts, resulting from the infinite Excellency of the divine Nature, is also *unchangeably* binding. As unchangeable as the divine Nature is, as unalterable as the divine Beauty is, even so unchangeable, so unalterable, in the very Nature of Things, is this our infinite Obligation, to love him supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively. As God is infinitely lovely in himself, and unchangeably so, so it is self-evident we are under an infinite and invariable Obligation to love him with all our Hearts. This cannot but be always our Duty. So long as God remains what he is, this will remain our Duty. It will in the Nature of Things be unalterably right and fit to love him; and not to do so, unalterably unfit and wrong.—— Our sinking down into ever so bad a Temper, and getting to be ever so remote from a Disposition to love him, can no more free us from the Obligation, than it can cause him to cease being amiable. He must cease to be amiable, before our Obligation thence arising can possibly cease to be binding. If there be no Alteration in his infinite Beauty, there can possibly be no Alteration in the infinite Obligation thence arising. While God remains what he is, and while our natural Powers and Faculties are maintained in Being, it must continue our Duty to love God with all our Hearts, and it cannot but be our Duty. In the Nature of Things it is right; and the Obligation is just as incapable of any Alteration, as is the Equality between twice two and four.— The fallen Angels are of so bad a Temper, that the very Thoughts of God will, doubtless, sooner than any Thing, stir up all their Hatred: But God deserves to be perfectly loved by them, as much as he did before their Apostacy. There is a great Alteration in the Temper of their Minds; but not the least Shadow of

Change

Change in the divine Beauty. Their having contracted so bad and wicked a Temper, cannot surely make it right and lawful for them to indulge it, and continue in it. Their impious Revolt surely cannot free them from the Authority and Government of Almighty God. He deserves their Homage and Subjection, as much as ever he did. The original Ground of *all* still remains; he is still THE LORD.— The same may be said of fallen Man. It is impossible, that our bad Temper should free us from our Obligation to love God with all our Hearts. It is still, in the Nature of Things, as wrong, not to love God with all our Hearts, as ever it was, or as it would have been, had we not joined with the fallen Angels, and turned Apostates. It must be so, unless our being of so bad and wicked a Temper makes it right for us to continue of such a Temper, and we not at all blame-worthy for acting agreeable thereto; that is, unless our being so very bad and wicked, makes us not at all to blame for our Badness and Wickedness. And so according to this Rule, the viler any Creature grows, and the more averse to God & to all Good, the less he is to blame: Which is one of the grossest Absurdities in the World.

Therefore,

(1.) *The divine Law which requires us to love God with all our Hearts, considered as a Rule of Duty, is in the Nature of Things unalterable, and absolutely uncapable of any Abatement, more or less.*——The Thing required, is, in the Nature of Things, our Duty, antecedent to any Consideration of an express Law in the Case. As that Children ought to honour their Parents, and Neighbours do as they would be done by, are Things in themselves Right, and Duties antecedent to any Consideration of an express Law in the Case. (*Eph.* 6. 1.) These Things would have been Duties, if there had never been any Laws made concerning them by God or Man. Yea, they are in their own Nature so Right, that they cannot but be our Duty, and to dishonour our Parents, and Cheat and Defraud and Injure our Neighbour, can't but be Wrong.—— So to love God with all our Hearts is originally right and fit and our Duty; and would have been so, had there never have been any positive, express Law in the Case.

Now

Now the grand Reason why God the great Governour of the World ever made a Law requiring of us to love him with all our Hearts, was because it was thus in its own Nature so infinitely fit. And now to suppose, that he would repeal, or alter, or abate this Law, when the Grounds and Reasons of his first making of it remain, as forceable as ever; when the Thing required is as right & fit as ever; & when it becomes him, as Governour of the World, still to require it, as much as ever; I say, to suppose such a Thing, casts the highest Reproach upon all his glorious Perfections.--It casts the highest Reflection upon his infinite *Holiness*, whereby he is infinitely inclined to love Right and hate Wrong; for it supposes him to release his Creatures from doing Right, and to allow them to do Wrong; a little at least.— It casts the highest Reflection upon his impartial *Justice*, whereby he is infinitely inclined to give every one their Due; for it supposes him to release his Creatures from giving unto God the Glory which is his Due, and to allow them to keep back Part at least.— It casts the highest Reflection upon his *Stability* and *Truth*: For it supposes him to alter his Law, when there is no Reason for it.—Yea, it reflects even upon his *Goodness* it self: For it is so far from being a Benefit to his Creatures to have this excellent Law altered, which is so compleatly suited to the Perfection and Happiness of their Nature, that it would be one of the greatest and sorest Calamities which could happen. Like the altering all the good Laws and Rules in a Family, merely to humour and gratify a rebellious Child, who will not be governed. Such a Child should be made to conform to the wholesome Laws of the Family, and not the Laws be abated and bro't down to a Level with his bad Temper and perverse Humour.— And finally, it casts the highest Reflection upon the infinite *Wisdom* of the great Governour of the World: For it supposes him to go counter to his own Honour and to the Good of his Creatures, to counteract all his Perfections, and contradict the Reason & Nature of Things; & that merely in Condescension unto, & in Compliance with, the sinful corrupt Taste and Inclinations of an apostate, rebellious, God-hating World.

And now, how could the great Governour of the World clear and vindicate the Honour of his great Name, in making

ing any Abatements in this Law, which requires us to love him with all our Hearts? Would he say, that *he had before required more Love than was his Due?* Surely, nothing can be much more blasphemous, than to suppose this.—Would he say, that *he does not deserve so much as he did?* Still it is equally blasphemous, to suppose this.—— Would he say, that *less* than is his Due, is *ALL* that is his Due? But this would be to contradict himself, in express Terms.—— Or would he openly profess *to quit his Right* and freely *allow* his Creatures to despise him a little, and sin sometimes, in Condescension unto and Compliance with the corrupt Inclinations of their sinful Hearts? But this, in the Nature of Things, would be infinitely Wrong and Dishonourable.—Upon what Grounds then could the supreme Governour of the World go about to make Abatements in a Law so holy, just and good, that only requires us to love him with all our Hearts; which in the Nature of Things, is so infinitely right and suitable? Or upon what Grounds can we possibly desire any Abatements to be made, unless we e'en profess, that we do not like the Law, that we are averse to loving God with all our Hearts, that it is a very tedious, self-denying Thing to us, and what we can by no Means freely come into; and so upon this Foot desire some Abatements! Or which is the same Thing; honestly own, "that we "love Sin so dearly, that God must tolerate us in it, or "we cannot approve of his Government."———

But indeed, God can as easily cease to be, as go about to licence and tolerate the least Sin: And he had rather *Heaven and Earth should pass away*, than that the least *Jot or Tittle of his Law should fail.* Mat. 5. 18.

How can any Body therefore once imagine, that Christ came down from Heaven and died, to purchase this Abatement of the Law of God, and procure this lawless Liberty for his rebellious Subjects! What! Did he desert his Father's Interest and Honour, and the Honour of his Law and Government, and spill his precious Blood, that he might perswade the great Governour of the World, to slacken the Reins of Government, and give out this impious Licence to Iniquity? —— Surely to suppose this, is to make Christ a Friend to Sin, and an Enemy to God.

What

What then do they mean, who in their Prayers presume to thank God for the gracious Abatements, which he has made in his Law? And what do Ministers mean by telling their People from the Pulpit, that the Law is abated, and that *sincere* Obedience is *ALL* that is now required of us?— Indeed, if poor secure Sinners are made to believe, that this was the great Business Christ came into the World upon, no wonder if their impious Hearts are pleased, and if they seem to love Christ, and prize the Gospel, and give Thanks to God for this great Goodness and Condescension; for hereby they are delivered from that Strictness in Religion which they hate, and a wide Door is opened for them to sin without Blame: Yea, they have the Comfort to think, that it is *no Sin*, not to love God with *all* their Heart, with *all* their Soul, and with *all* their Strength. And generally a very little Matter of Religion they think will serve. And now it's good Times, and they bless themselves. But alas! They *feed upon the Wind: A deceived Heart hath turned them aside.*

But by the Way,— To what Purpose was it for Christ to die to purchase this Abatement? What Need was there of it? Or what Good could it do?— For if the Law *really* required *too much*, the Governour of the World was obliged in Justice to make some Abatements: And so the Death of Christ in the Case was perfectly Needless.— And if the Law required but *just enough*, the Governour of the World could not in Justice make any Abatements: And so Christ must have died *in vain*, and totally lost his End.

But indeed Christ never came into the World upon this Design: as he expressly declares in Mat. 5.17,18. *Think not, that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, 'till Heaven and Earth pass, one Jot or one Tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, 'till all be fulfilled.* And this is the very Thing he condemns the Pharisees for thrô all this Chapter, that they in Effect taught this Doctrine, that the Law was abated; that they taught, that although the Law did forbid some external and more gross Acts of Sin, yet it did not the first stirring of Corruption at Heart, & some lesser Iniquities. For Instance, that "they must not commit *Murder*; but that

" that it was no Harm to be angry without Cauſe, and " ſpeak reproachfully, and keep a ſecret Grudge at Heart. " (℣. 21,—26.) That they muſt not commit *Adultery*; but " that it was no Harm to have ſecret laſcivious Thoughts. " (℣. 27,—30.) That they muſt not be guilty of *Perjury*; " but that there was no Harm in little petty Oaths in com- " mon Converſation. (℣. 33,—37.) That they muſt not " *hate their Friends*, but there was no Harm in hating their " Enemies." (℣. 43,—47.) Theſe and ſuch like Allowances they taught, were made in the Law; and ſo, that ſuch Things were not ſinful. But our Saviour condemns their Doctrine, as falſe and damning; and inſiſts upon it, that the Law is not abated, and never ſhall be; but ſays, it ſtill requires us to be *perfect*, *as our heavenly Father is perfect*. (℣. 48.) And declares, that *if our Righteouſneſs exceedeth not the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees* (who were ſo much for abating the Law,) *we ſhall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. (℣. 20.) So *far* was our bleſſed Saviour from any Deſign to abate the holy Law of God, or leſſen our Obligations to a perfect Conformity to it.——— And indeed, if Chriſt had died, and ſhould die a Thouſand Times, to purchaſe an Abatement of the Law, (if it be lawful to make ſuch a Suppoſition) it would be to no Purpoſe: For it cannot be abated, unleſs God ceaſes to be what he is. For ſo long as God is infinitely lovely, we ſhall *neceſſarily* be under an infinite Obligation to love him with *all* our Heart, and with *all* our Strength; and it will *neceſſarily* be infinitely Wrong, not to do ſo.—— The Truth is, that God's ſending his Son into the World to die for the Redemption of Sinners, inſtead of freeing us from our original natural Obligations to keep the Law, binds us more ſtrongly ſo to do; as we ſhall afterwards ſee.—Pſal. 119. 160. *Thy Word is true from the Beginning: And every one of thy righteous Judgments endureth for ever.* (℣. 128.) *I eſteem all thy Precepts concerning all Things to be Right.* (℣. 144.) *The Righteouſneſs of thy Teſtimonies is everlaſting.* (℣. 152.) *Thou haſt founded them for ever.* And therefore (℣. 160.) *Every one of them will endure for ever.* As if the *Pſalmiſt* had ſaid, " The Thing required in thy Law is in it's own Nature " Right, everlaſtingly Right; and therefore, as Governour

" of

" of the World, thou hast by Law for ever settled and esta-
" blished it as Duty, by a Law never to be altered, but to
" endure for ever: and for ever therefore will it endure."

OBJECT. *But is it fair and just for God to require more of his Creatures, than they can do?*

ANSWER. What are we come to, in this apostate World, that we can't see it to be just and fair, in the great Governour of Heaven and Earth, the infinitely glorious God, to require us his Creatures, so much as to love him, with *all* our Hearts? What! Is this *too much?* Is this more than he deserves from us?— Or does the Truth lie here, that we hate him so, that we cannot find in our Hearts to love him; and therefore cry, " He must
" not insist upon it, or if he does, he deals unjustly and is
" very hard with us?"— But is not this the very Thing those Citizens did, who hated their Prince, and sent after him, saying, *We will not have this Man to reign over us?* Luk. 19. 14.— These Hints may serve as an Answer for the present: But of this more hereafter.

But, while *some* are pleading, that Christ died to purchase an Abatement of the Law, *others* carry the Point still further, and *say* that Christ died *entirely to disannul it*; and so, that now it *wholly* ceases to be a Rule of Life to Believers. When as one great and declared Design of Christ's coming into the World was, to recover his People to a Conformity thereto. (*Tit.* 2. 11, 12, 13.) — Oh how Men do love their Corruptions, and hate God and his holy Law, and long to have it cashier'd and removed out of the World, that so they may live as they list, and yet escape the Reproaches of their Consciences here, and eternal Punishment hereafter!— But GOD *sitteth King for ever*, and will assert the *Rights* of his Crown, and maintain the Honour of his Majesty, and the Glory of his great Name, and vindicate his injured Law; altho' it be in the eternal Damnation of Millions of his rebellious Subjects. Luk. 19. 27. *But those mine Enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.*— And here by the Way, we may see what an aversion Men have to right Thoughts of God and divine Things; and may be convinced of the absolute Necessity of a supernatural all-conquer-

ing Light, to remove these Prejudices, and make Men see and believe the Truth, and love and cordially embrace it. (*Joh.* 8. 47.— 1 *Cor.* 2. 14.)— A holy God does not appear infinitely glorious and amiable to an unholy Heart: and Sinners not seeing the *Grounds* of loving God with all their Hearts, hence do not see the *Reason* of the Law; hence do not see how *holy*, *just* and *good* the Law is, and the *carnal Mind* being *Enmity against God*, is at the same Time Enmity against the *Law*, which is a Transcript of the divine Nature (*Rom.* 8. 7.) And hence Sinners do not love to believe either God or his Law to be what they really are. And this Temper makes them blind to what the Scripture says, and leads them to frame a false Image of God, and entertain false Notions of his Law, that they may have a *God* and a *Law* both to their own Minds.

And now, as are Men's Notions of the *Law*, such are their Notions of *Religion*; the Essence of which principally consists in a Conformity to the Law.

Hence, here is *one*, he pleads for great *Abatements* in the Law, and he contents himself with the mere *Form* of Religion. He is not Unjust, nor an Extortioner, nor an Adulterer; but much better than some of his Neighbours: He prays in his Family, goes to publick Worship, and attends the Sacrament, and thinks himself a very good Man; like him in *Luk.* 18. 9, 10, &c. But as for the Doctrines relating to our *natural Depravity*, *Regeneration*, *Conversion*, *Faith*, *Communion with God*, and *all the inside of Religion*, he understands nothing about them; they seem as strange as it did to *Nicodemus* to hear Christ discourse about the *New-Birth*. (*Joh.* 3.) And all the Talk about the *inward Influences* of the holy Spirit, in awakening, convincing, humbling and converting a Sinner, and in enlightening, teaching, quickning, comforting and sanctifying a Believer, is quite unintelligible: for these Things don't come into his Notions of Religion.—According to his Opinion, the Law is brought down so low, that it is an easy Thing to become a good Man: the Change is but small, and there is scarce any Need of the Spirit's Help; much less any Room for the Exercise of Sovereign Grace; for he is so good-natured, that he can become Good of his own free Will, (i. e. accord-

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ing to his Notions of Goodness,) and do that which shall effectually intitle him to the Promises: And thus he has the Staff in his own Hand. And now here is a *charming* Religion, perfectly suited to the Taste of an apostate World; for it's calculated to quiet the Conscience, while the Heart lies out estranged from God and dead in Sin. (*Rom.* 7. 8,9.) Especially, so much of it, as is for their Credit and apparently serves their worldly Interest, will pretty readily and heartily be fallen in with; and *the best have their Failings*, *no Man is perfect*, and *I endeavour to be sincere*, and *the best have their Doubts*, *Assurance is not to be attained*, and such like Pleas help to keep their Consciences secure. And now, O how they love those Ministers, that cry, *Peace*, *Peace!* But hate those that would search Things to the Bottom, and sound an Alarm to secure Sinners, and deluded Hypocrites.— The same Temper that makes them hate God and his Law, makes them hate his Ministers too. And they are for another Kind of a God, & for another Kind of a Law, another Kind of a Religion, and another Kind of Ministers, that they may have all to their Mind. And when all is done, they are confident they are now in the Right, because they are suited. They *love* to have it so; and therefore firmly *believe* it is so.

Hence, again, here is *another*, who has been mightily terrified and in great Distress under a Sense of the Wrath of God and the Dreadfulness of Damnation; but in the distressing Hour he has had it *revealed* to him (by the Spirit of God, he thinks) that his *Sins are forgiven*; and now he is *sure* of Heaven, and is ravished at the Thoughts of eternal Glory: he holds it a great *Sin* to *doubt*; and all his Religion consists in Faith and Joy, *i. e.* in believing that his Sins are forgiven, and rejoycing in his blessed and happy and safe Estate, and in the Expectation of future Glory.— But as for a real Conformity to the *Law*, it makes up no Part of his Religion. He understands rightly nothing what the Law requires; he is neither sensible of his Duty to God, or to his Fellow-Men: Yea, he hates to hear any Thing about *Law*, or *Duty*.— It is all *Legal*, he cries, *and tends to kill Religion, and to wound weak Christians, and grieve and drive away the Spirit of Grace:* and no preaching

ſuits his Taſte, but what conſiſts in telling over and commending ſuch Experiences as his, and in ſetting forth the Love of God and Chriſt to ſuch, and calling upon ſuch to believe, and rejoyce, and never doubt their State again. And in general thoſe Things which tend to ſtrengthen his Confidence and increaſe his Joy, he eſteems right and good; and all Things of a contrary Tendency he eſteems wrong and bad. This ſeems to be his only *Criterion* of Right and Wrong, and the only Rule he makes Uſe of in drawing up a Judgment: But as for the *Law*, it is of no Uſe with him. —There is doubtleſs many a Man that feels and acts and lives, as if the Law was abated, who yet will not plead for that Doctrine.— So doubtleſs there is many a Man that feels and acts and lives, as if the Law wholly ceaſed to be a Rule of Life, who yet will not venture to ſay ſo. The Force of Education and their worldly Intereſt and Credit keeps Men many Times from ſhewing what they be, by an open Profeſſion. However, ſecretly this Temper reigns within them; yea, ſometimes it breaks out into open Light, in their viſible Conduct.— But, as ſtrange as it may ſeem, there are Multitudes that not only have the Root of theſe Things in their Hearts, but really believe them and openly profeſs and plead for them. Hence it is on the one Hand, that the *Arminian*, *Neonomian*, and *Pelagiam* Errors have taken their Riſe, and the *Antinomian*, on the other. Wrong Notions of God lie at the Bottom; and then wrong Notions of the Law; and then wrong Notions of Religion in general: and all originally proceed and grow up out of the wrong Temper of Men's Minds. For all unregenerate Men would fain have a *God* and a *Law* and a *Religion* to ſuit the Temper of their Hearts. *Micah* 4. 5. *For all People will walk every one in the Name of his God.*

In the mean Time, the truly godly Man, who ſees that the *Obligation*, which he is under to love God with all his Heart, reſulting from the Excellency of the divine Nature, is *unchangeable*; and that the *Law*, which requires this, is *unalterable*; inſtead of going about to contrive a Religion that may ſuit the natural Temper of his Heart, is convinced that the Temper of his Heart is the *very* Thing that muſt be changed.—He is convinced of his infinite Obligation to be altogether

altogether such as the *Law* requires him to be, and that he is infinitely blameable for the least Defect.— Hence, those Words, *The Law is holy, just, and good, the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under Sin. O wretched Man that I am!* do exactly express the Thoughts of the most exalted Saint on Earth, yea, even of the great Saint *Paul* himself, *Rom.* 7. 12, 14, 24.— Indeed, had St. *Paul* thought that the Law was wholly disannulled, or much abated, he might then have imagined that he was so good, as to be quite free from Sin, or pretty near being so, and been ready to speak the Language of the *Pharisee*; *God, I thank thee, I am not as other Men.* But now, notwithstanding all his high and wonderful Attainments, yet, when he considered what the *Law* was, which he was under, and how very far he was from being exactly what that required, the native Language of his humble Heart is, *I am carnal, sold under Sin! O wretched Man that I am!* * — And now the Apostle, from a Sense of his infinite Obligations to be what the Law requires, and of his great Distance from this, *forgets the Things which are behind*; and he *runs*, he *wrestles*, he *fights*, he *strives*, he *keeps under his Body*, he *lays aside every Weight*; in short, he appears like a Man in a perfect Agony: *So great was his Sense of Duty, and so much had he to do.*——And at the same Time, from a Sense of his Impotency and of his Unworthiness, of his Need of the Redeemer and the Sanctifier, it is his Maxim, to *pray always*, and to ask all Things *in the Name of Christ.*—— Now in his Example we have the Temper, which prevails more or less in every godly Man, exactly painted.——And thus we have had pictured in Miniature three different Sorts of Religion, arising from three different Notions of the Law. The *Picture* is begun; and in the sequel, I purpose to paint all three, as near to the Life as I can; that we may see what they be, and wherein

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* Some have thought, that St. *Paul* had arrived so nigh to *Perfection*, that he could not speak these Words of *himself*. Their Mistake seems to arise from their wrong Notions of the *Law*, to which St. *Paul* compared himself, and according to which he drew up his Judgment. And from the same Source it seems to be, that they can think those Words, *ver.* 22. applicable to the Unregenerate. *I delight in the Law of God after the inward Man.* When in Truth the Unregenerate are in their Temper, diametrically opposite to the *Law*. Rom. 8. 7.

they differ; which is Right, and which is Wrong. But so much for the first Inference, that the *Law* as a *Rule of Duty*, cannot be *repealed or abated.*

And now to proceed,

2. From what has been said it is evident, that *the Law in its Threatnings of eternal Damnation for the least Sin, is equally uncapable of any Repeal or Abatement.*— For if our Obligation, to love God with all our Hearts and obey him in every Thing, resulting from the divine Perfections, is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable; and if therefore the least Sin necessarily be infinitely Evil, and deserving of an infinite Punishment, and unalterably so; then the Law considered as threatning eternal Damnation for the least Sin, is in its own Nature unalterably holy and just: And consequently it cannot be repealed, consistently with the Holiness, Justice, and Honour of the great Governour of the World. If the Governour of the World had, in a *mere arbitrary Manner*, made a Law, that Sin should be punished with eternal Damnation; then he might, in a *mere arbitrary Manner*, have repealed it: But since, in the Nature of Things, *Justice called for it*, that such a Law should be made, therefore so long as the Grounds and Reasons of the Law remain, the Law cannot, in *Justice*, be repealed.

None can deny, but that the great Governour of the World has actually made a Law, that Sin shall be punished with eternal Damnation: And none can deny, but that this Law is to be put in Execution, to the full, at and after the great Judgment-Day. But if *Justice had not called for it*, surely the *infinitely good* Governour of the World would never have made such a Law; much less would he ever put it in Execution. For to make and execute such a Law, *in a merely arbitrary sovereign Manner*, when in the Nature of Things *Justice does not call for it*, would be infinitely cruel and tyrannical, and perfectly inconsistent with the divine Perfections; as is self-evident. See *Gen.* 18. 25. and *Ezek.* 18. 25.

But then, if the great Governour of the World made this Law *not arbitrarily*, but because in the Nature of Things *Justice called for it*; then so long as the Reason and Ground of the Law remains, the Law it self cannot *in Justice* ever be

be repealed. If Justice called for its being made, then it cannot be *un-made* consistently with Justice, so long as the Ground and Reason of it remains; as is self-evident.—— But the Reason of the Law is, in the Nature of Things, *unalterable*. For the Reason of the Law was the *infinite Evil of Sin*, whereby it deserved an infinite Punishment. As long therefore as Sin remains an infinite Evil, so long must the Law stand unrepealed: But Sin will always be an infinite Evil, so long as we are under infinite Obligations to love God with all our Hearts and obey him in every Thing; which we shall always be, so long as God remains infinitely glorious and amiable, and this will be for ever. Therefore this Law can *never* possibly, consistent with divine *Justice*, be repealed.

For any, therefore, to desire to have it repealed, is to turn Enemy to the Holiness and Justice and Honour of the supreme Ruler of the World, as well as to his Law and Government: And argues, that they have no Regard to the Rectitude and Fitness of Things, but only to *Self-Interest*: as those among Men are real Enemies to the civil Government, who desire the good and wholesome Laws thereof to be repealed. And it is upon this Ground, that St. *Paul* concludes *carnal* Men to be at *Enmity against GOD*, because they are Enemies to his Law. (*Rom.* 8. 7.) For if Men loved God, they would be disposed to love his Law and Government, which express his Nature.

To suppose therefore, that the Son of God came into the World and died, that the Law in its *Threatnings* might be *repealed*, is to suppose that he also is turned an Enemy to God, to his Holiness and Justice, to his Law & Government; and that he is properly gone over to be on the Side of his Father's rebellious Subjects.

Besides, to what Purpose would it have been (on the Hypothesis of these Men) for Christ to have died, that the Law in its Threatnings might be repealed? What Need was there of it? or what Good would it have done? For if in *Justice* it ought to have been repealed, there was no Need of his dying to procure this: Or, if in *Justice* it ought *not* to be repealed, then his dying could not procure it, and so would do no Good. The righteous Governour

of the World would have repealed it of his own Accord, if it had been right and fit so to do: and if in the Nature of Things it was not right, then not any Thing whatever could perswade him to do it.

But the Truth is, Christ came into the World and died *to answer all the Demands of the Law*; that so altho' the Sinner be saved, yet the Law might never be repealed, but be firmly established. For the Governour of Heaven & Earth was utterly against the Law's being repealed, as a Thing in itself infinitely unreasonable. And therefore the Apostle says, *Do we make void the Law thro' Faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the Law.* (Rom. 3. 31.) And indeed it was nothing but God's infinite Aversion to repeal the Law, as a Thing in it self infinitely unfit & wrong, that was the Thing which made the Death of Christ needful. For, if the Law might have been repealed, Sinners might have been saved without any more ado: but if it could not, and must not be repealed, then the Demands of it must be answered by some Means or other, or every Sinner damned. And now Christ step'd in and did this; and so secured the Honour of God's Holiness & Justice, Law and Government, and opened a Way for the Sinner's Salvation. And this Account of the Reason of Christ's Death the Scriptures plainly give us. Gal. 3. 10, 13, 14. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things written in the Book of the Law to do them.—Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.—That the Blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles thro' Jesus Christ.* For (Heb. 9. 22.) *without shedding of Blood there is no Remission.* Therefore (*Rom.* 3. 25, 26.) Christ was *set forth to be a Propitiation for Sin, — to declare his Righteousness,— that he might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* And hence (*℣.* 31.) *Do we make void the Law thro' Faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the Law.*

Yea, the Apostle evidently sets out upon this Hypothesis, that the Law is not repealed, but stands in full Force. He lays this down as a *first Principle*, in that argumentative Discourse which we have in the three first Chapters of his Epistle to the *Romans*. Chap. 1. *℣* 18. *The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness & Unrighteousness*

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of Men. And taking this for granted, he goes on to prove, *that both* Jews *and* Greeks *are all under Sin*, and so *the whole World guilty before God* ; to the 19th *ver.* of the 3d *Chap.* And hence he argues, *that by the Deeds of the Law no Flesh could be justified.* But now, if the Law was repealed, the whole World was not Guilty before God, nor any one in the World : *For Sin is not imputed, where there is no Law.* (Rom. 5. 13)— And if the Law was repealed, what Need was there of such a long Train of Arguments, to prove, that no Flesh could be justified by the Law ? For it would have been enough to have said, that a repealed Law could neither justify nor condemn any Body.—And why does he use such Arguments as he does ? For thus he reasons, " The Law " requires perfect Obedience as a Condition of Life, & threat- " ens Tribulation and Wrath against every Soul of Man " that doth Evil : But *Jews* and *Gentiles* have all sinned : " Therefore are all guilty & condemned according to Law ; " and consequently cannot be cleared and justified by Law." For all this Reasoning supposes, that the Law is as much in Force as ever it was. And accordingly he goes on to shew, that the Design of Christ's Death was to answer the Demands of the Law, that there might be a Way opened for the Salvation of Sinners, consistent with divine Justice, and at the same Time the Law not be made void, but established ; As was before observed.

And now this being the Case,

Hence, we find the Scriptures every where look upon those that have not a special Interest in the Righteousness of Christ by Faith, as being as much under the Wrath of God and Curse of the Law, as if Christ had never died. *Joh.* 3. 18. *He that believeth not is condemned already.* & 36. *The Wrath of God abideth upon him.* And, *Gal.* 3. 10. *As many as are of the Works of the Law are under the Curse.* And, *Rom.* 1. 18. *The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men. who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness.*— Thus the Wrath of God is revealed against the Unbeliever ; yea, abides upon him ; yea, the Law condemns and curses him. But if the Law had been repealed by the Death of Christ, all the World would have been freed from the Curse. For a repealed Law, can neither

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bleſs the righteous, nor curſe the wicked; but ſtands for nothing.

And hence alſo, we find that Chriſtleſs Sinners, when awakened by the Holy Spirit to ſee and feel what a State they are in, are always convinced that they are under the Wrath of God and Curſe of the Law; and hereby are made to underſtand their Need of a Saviour. (*Rom.* 3. 19, 20.) But if the Law had been repealed by the Death of Chriſt, this could not be; for they would then have been under no Wrath, nor Curſe. Nor would any have ever felt a *Spirit of Bondage*, as they do in every Age of the World, and as they uſed to do in St. *Paul*'s Day. (*Rom.* 8. 15.) For it is the *Law* only, *that works Wrath.* Rom. 4. 15.

And hence we ſhall find, even all the World ſhall find, and Thouſands and Thouſands to their everlaſting Sorrow, that when the Day of Judgment comes, the Law ſhall be executed with the utmoſt Severity, upon all that *know not God, and obey not the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.* (2. *Theſſ.* 1. 7, 8.) And God's Juſtice in ſo doing will ſhine bright in the Sight of all Worlds: For he deſigns on that Day to reveal the Righteouſneſs of his Judgments. And hence it is called, *the Day of the Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God.* (*Rom.* 2. 5.) But if the Law is repealed by the Death of Chriſt, and if God has told the World that he has repealed it; for him now to revive it, & judge & condemn the World by it; would be to caſt Contempt upon the Death of Chriſt, and deceive his poor Creatures, and unmercifully and unrighteouſly judge and condemn them, by a Law that was repealed, a Law they never were under, and ſo ought never to have been judged by. From the whole therefore, it is evident that the Law, that threatens eternal Damnation for the leaſt Sin, never has been, nor ever will be repealed.

Well then (if this be the Caſe) may Miniſters thunder Hell and Damnation againſt a ſecure, wicked World. And well may poor Sinners tremble under a Senſe of divine Wrath, when their Eyes begin to be opened to ſee where they be. For all thoſe Comforts that the Formaliſt gets by thinking the Law is abated or diſannulled, and ſo his State ſafe, are but the Reſult of an erroneous Head and a Heart ſecure in Sin. And what has been ſaid under this Particular

lar, will rationally account for all the Agony and Distress of an awakened Sinner.— When God, the great Governour of the World, the Revenger of Sin, begins to make the poor Sinner remember his Ways and his Doings which have not been right, and see what a Creature he is, and what a Condition he is in, and be sensible of what he deserves; and when he comes to understand that his Soul is forfeited, and that it is right that Justice should take Place, and that God is at Liberty to do as he pleases: Surely this must be Heart-rending, Soul-distressing to a poor, sinful, guilty, Hell-deserving Creature.

And if God will not repeal the Law, but still insist upon it, that it is holy and just; no wonder the Sinner is made to own it too, before ever he is pardoned. For it would be unbecoming the supreme Lord of the Universe, to grant a Pardon to a guilty Rebel, that is too high-hearted to own, that the Law by which he stands condemned, is holy and just.— O how right it is, that the Sinner should come down, and see and know and own for ever, that he is justly condemned, and as such apply himself to the Sovereign Grace of God thro' Jesus Christ for a Pardon! And O how sovereign and free and divine, is that Grace, that pardons and saves the poor, sinful, guilty, Hell-deserving Wretch thro' Jesus Christ! (*Rom.* 3. 19, 27.)— And thus as God the Father honours the Law, by refusing to repeal it; and God the Son, by answering it's Demands; so does God the Holy Ghost, by making the poor Sinner, see and feel and own, that it is holy and just, before ever he internally reveals the Mercy of God thro' Jesus Christ unto him. So that the Law is honoured, and Sin is imbittered, and the Sinner humbled, and Grace glorified, all at once.— As in the external Revelation God has made in his Word, the Law is before the Gospel; so it is in internal Influences and Operations of the holy Spirit upon the Elect; and that for the same Reason, that *the Law* might be *a School-Master, to bring Men to Christ.*

To conclude, from all that has been said, we may learn what to think of the Religion and of the Hopes of these two Sorts of Men.— (1.) The *legal Hypocrite*: who supposing, that the *good old Law* is repealed and laid aside, and that a *new Law*, only requiring *sincere Obedience*, is established in its

its Room ; hence meerly from Self-love, and for Self-ends, ſets about Duty and endeavours to be ſincere ; and here on this Foundation builds all his Hopes of Acceptance in the Sight of God. For ſince the Law is not repealed, but ſtands in full Force ; therefore the Religion of ſuch, is not *that Thing* which God requires or will accept ; and their *new Law* is a *Whim*, and their Hopes are all built on the Sand. Their whole Scheme reſults from a total Ignorance of God, and his Law, and the preſent State of Mankind ; and is entirely built on Falſehood.— (2.) The *Evangelical Hypocrite :* All whoſe *Faith* & *Joy* originally reſult from a ſuppoſed Diſcovery, of the Love of God, or Love of Chriſt, or that his Sins are pardoned. This Diſcovery is the Foundation of hisFaith, and hisFaith is theFoundation of his Joy and of all his Religion. And yet the Thing diſcovered is a Lie. For, as has been proved, every one until he is a Believer, until he has acted Faith, is not pardoned, but condemned ; is not beloved of God, but under his Wrath ; and therefore to have Pardon of Sin and the Love of God diſcovered before the firſt act of Faith, and to have ſuch a Diſcovery lay the Foundation for the firſt act of Faith, and a Foundation for all Religion, is to be impoſed upon with a Lie, and to have a groſs Falſehood lie at the Foundation of their Faith, their Religion and of all their Hopes.— The *legal* Hypocrite may be convinced by ſuchScriptures as theſe, *Luk.* 18. 9—13. *Rom.* 3. 20—31. and *Chap.* 4. *v.* 5. Which prove that a Man cannot find Acceptance with God by his own Righteouſneſs.——And the *evangelical* Hypocrite may be convinced by ſuch Scriptures as theſe, *Joh.* 3. 18, 36. *Act.* 3. 19. Which prove that a Sinner is not pardoned till after Faith.— A true Sight and Senſe of the Law, would effectually convince the one, and the other, that all their Hopes are built on wrong Apprehenſions of Things ; and that all their Religion is Counterfeit ; and that they are yet in the Gall of Bitterneſs and Bonds of Iniquity : And the one would no longer venture his Soul on his *own Righteouſneſs*, nor the other on his *Diſcovery*. The Law's inſiſting upon perfect, ſinleſs Obedience, would convince the one, that his own Righteouſneſs might not be depended upon : and the Law's curſing every Unbeliever, would convince

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the other, that his Discovery was false. And the Law's requiring us to love God primarily for his own Beauty, would convince both of their graceless Estates, in as much as the Religion of both primarily takes its Rise from Self-love.— It is from the want of a realizing Sight and Sense of the Nature and Extent of the Law, and that out of Christ we are exposed to all the Curses thereof, that a sinful, guilty World are so insensible of their graceless, and their wretched and miserable Condition, and so apt to flatter themselves that they are rich, and increased in Goods, and stand in Need of Nothing. *Rom.* 7. 8,9. *Without the Law Sin was dead.— I was alive without the Law once.*

Thus we see that the *Obligation* which we were under, to love God with all our Hearts, *resulting from the infinite Excellency of the divine Nature*, antecedent to all selfish Considerations, is *infinitely*, *eternally* and *unchangeably* binding. And thus we see a Variety of important Consequences necessarily following therefrom. And I have insisted the longer upon the Nature of this Obligation, not only because it is the first and greatest; but because it has a mighty Influence into all our *additional* Obligations.— For,

5. and lastly. *It is from the infinite Excellency of the divine Nature, that all our additional Obligations originally derive their Strength, their Energy, their binding Power.* The infinite Excellency of the divine Nature so entirely lays the Foundation of it's being our Duty to love God with all our Hearts, that were it not for this, it would cease to be our Duty, notwithstanding all other Considerations. If he were not *by Nature* God, it would not be fit, that we should love and worship him as God, upon any Account whatsoever. He could have no such Right to us; or Authority over us, as to make it our Duty; nor could he render it our Duty by shewing of us any Kindness whatsoever. Yea, if he were not by *Nature* God, it would be *wrong* for us to pay him *divine* Adoration. It would be *Idolatry*. It would be a worshiping of one *as God*, who by *Nature* is *not God*. And by the same Argument which the *Orthodox* have been wont to use against the *Arians*, who deny the Divinity of Christ; *If he be not a divine Person, he ought not to have divine Worship paid him:* I say, by the same Argument, if God were

were not by *Nature* GOD, it could not upon any Account be Right and our Duty, to love and worſhip him as *God*. It is his being by Nature God, his being what he is, and his infinite Excellency in being ſuch, which therefore lays the original Foundation of all our Obligations, and which gives Life and Energy to all. And accordingly we may obſerve, that the original Ground and Reaſon upon which God, as Governour of the World, acts, in making a *Law* that we ſhould *love him with all our Hearts*, is, becauſe he is *the Lord*. As is evident from the Tenor of *the Law* it ſelf. *Thou ſhalt love the LORD* &c. *i. e.* Becauſe he is the LORD, &c. Yea, it is upon this Ground originally that God takes it upon him to give all his Laws to us; for this is the conſtant Style, *Thus and thus ſhall ye do, FOR I AM THE LORD.*

Thoſe therefore, who are influenced to love and worſhip God, *not at all* becauſe he is *God*, but *altogether* from other Conſiderations; not *at all* from a Senſe of his infinite Excellency, but *altogether* on other Accounts; are ſo far from being truly religious, that they are indeed guilty of great Wickedneſs in all they do. For altho' they pretend to love and worſhipGod, yet it is not at all becauſe he is God: tho' they pretend to pay divine Adoration to him, yet it is not at all becauſe he is a divine Being. So that when they pretend to pay divine Worſhip and Adoration to God, it is meerly from ſome ſelfiſh Conſideration, from Self-love and for Self-ends; there is no true Regard to God, but all centers in *Self*. So that *Self* indeed is their *Idol*, and the only *God* they ſerve. And their pretending to love and worſhip God is mere *Mockery*.—When they pretend to love and worſhip God, it is not at all becauſe he is God, not at all from a Senſe of his divine Glory; but only to appeaſe his Anger and obtain his Favour, or becauſe they conſider him as their Friend and Benefactor. And now to come to God and pretend to worſhip him as if he was God, and yet not to do it at all becauſe he is God, but for mean & mercenary and ſelfiſh Ends, is a very complicated Wickedneſs: and to think to pleaſe God in this Way, and get into Favour by this Means, diſcovers ſuch Ignorance and Contempt of God, and a Frame of Heart ſo full of ſecret Blaſphemy, ſpiritual Idolatry,

Idolatry, Pride, and Hypocrisy, as cannot easily be expressed.— They practically deny his Divinity: yet pretend to pay him divine Worship.— They pretend to serve God: yet really intend only to serve themselves.— They make as if they loved God: But only love themselves.—Yet so intolerably mean are their Thoughts of God, that they expect to please him by all this.— To make the best of it, all that Religion is mere Hypocrisy, which does not primarily take its Rise from a Sense of the infinite Excellency of the divine Nature.

Thus then we see what is the *first* and *chief Motive* of a genuine Love to God.— He is a Being of infinite Understanding, & of almighty Power, infinite in Wisdom, Holiness, Justice, Goodness, and Truth; and so a Being of infinite Glory and Excellency; and so infinitely amiable, and infinitely worthy to be loved with all our Hearts. — And this Obligation is binding originally in itself, antecedent to a Consideration of any other Motive whatsoever: and it is infinitely, eternally and unchangeably binding, and gives Life and Energy and Strength to all other Obligations.— And hence if we do love God with all our Hearts, we do but our Duty and deserve no Thanks: But we are infinitely to blame for the least Defect, and can never do any Thing to atone for it, but deserve everlasting Damnation. And it will always be our Duty thus to love God, and the least Defect will be always thus blame-worthy, let our Circumstances as to Happiness or Misery be what they will. All our Hearts will be always due to God, and we shall always stand bound to pay this Debt, whether we have any Heart for it or no. And God will always appear such an infinite Enemy to the least Defect, as in his Law he has declared himself to be; nor is there any Hopes of our finding Acceptance in his Sight, unless it be by a Union to and Interest in Him, who has answered all the Demands of the Law in the Room of those who believe in Him. And all Pretence of Love to God which does not take its Rise from this Foundation, is but meer Hypocrisy.——All these Consequences so necessarily follow, from a Supposition of the infinite Excellency & Amiableness of the divine Nature, and so evidently, as that if God be but seen aright; a Sense of his infinite

Beauty

Beauty will immediately assure the Heart, that these Things are so. A Sense of his infinite Glory will make us see and feel that we are under infinite Obligations to love him with all our Hearts, and that we could deserve no Thanks for doing so, but that the least Defect is infinitely Wrong, *&c.* A Sense of the infinite Glory of God will effectually establish the Heart in these Things against all the subtle Arguments and fair Pretences of Hereticks. A Sense of the infinite Glory of God immediately imparted to the Soul by the Spirit of God, whereby the Heart is thus divinely established in the Belief of the Truth, is therefore that *Unction from the holy One*, which all the Saints have, whereby they are effectually secured from being finally led away by false Teachers. At least that *Unction* consists partly in this. 1 *Joh.* 2. 20.—27.— And at the same Time, that the People of God are thus established in the Belief of these Truths, relating to Law and Duty, from a Sense of the infinite Glory of God; I say, at the same Time this Sense of the infinite Glory of God, begets a Disposition in the Heart to conform to this Law and do this Duty. And thus it is that God *writes his Law in our Hearts* and *puts it in our inward Parts*, when he intends to *become our God* and to *make us his People.* (Heb. 8. 10, 11.) And hence it begins to be the *Nature* of the People of God, to love him with all their Hearts. And their Views and their Temper and every Thing else being thus entirely *new*, hence they are called *new Creatures. Old Things are past away, and all Things are become new.*— But now this Sense of the infinite Glory of God, which thus lays the very lowest Foundation of true Religion, is intirely left out of all false Religions. And by *this*, true Religion stands distinguished, as something specifically different from all the false Religions in the World. And hence we may observe, that it is spoken of in Scripture, as something peculiar to true Saints, that they *see* God, and *know* God. Joh. 8. 19, 55. *Ye neither know me, nor my Father.* Joh. 14. 19 *The World seeth me no more, but ye see me.* 1 Joh. 3. 6. *Whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him.* 1 Joh. 2. 3. *Hereby we do know, that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.* 1 Joh. 4. 7, 8. *Every one that loveth, knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God.*— And the unregenerate

rate not knowing God, not having a Sense of his infinite Glory to lay the Foundation of their Love and of their Religion; hence all their Love and all their Religion entirely take their Rise from mere selfish Considerations, and nothing but Self-love lies at Bottom. And hence it is natural for unregenerate Men to think they deserve something for their Duties, and as natural to be insensible of the infinite Evil of their Sins. And so 'tis their Nature, to magnify and be proud of their own Goodness, and to extenuate and be unhumbled for their Badness. And from hence results our native Aversion to *Faith* and *Repentance*, and Contrariety to the *Gospel-Way of Salvation*. And now NEW *Gospels*, *new Sorts of Faith* and *Repentance* are coined, *new* Notions of Religion contrived, to suit the depraved Temper and Vitiated Taste of unhumbled, impenitent Sinners, who are concerned to secure their own Interest, but care not what becomes of God's Honour. Hence Errors take their Rise, and professing Christians are divided into Parties, and one runs this Way, and another that, and all hope to get to Heaven at last.— And now at length after so great a variety of Inferences and Remarks, and so large a Consideration of the first and chief Motive of a genuine Love to God; I proceed,

2. To take a short View of *the additional Obligations which we lie under*, to love God with all our Hearts. *I AM THE LORD*, (this lays the first Foundation, and leads the Way, when from *Mount Sinai*, the Almighty proclaims his Law, but then he immediately goes on to add,) *THY GOD, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt and out of the House of Bondage.* Exod. 20.— God has such a Right to us, and such an Authority over us, and has done so many Things for us, and promised so many Things to us, that our additional Obligations to be the Lord's, to love him and live to him, are exceeding great.

Particularly,

Nothing is more reasonable than that we should be *entirely dedicated* to that God, whose we be, *originally*, and by an *entire*, *underived* and *unalienable* Right. Especially considering what he is in himself, and that he is Lord of all Things, and by Nature God most high.— Indeed, if our Creator was not by Nature the most high God, then he could

not be the ſupreme Lord of all Things; for there would be one above him; and ſo we ſhould not be his, entirely and abſolutely; for he himſelf and we his Creatures, would belong originally to another, even to him that by Nature would be the moſt high God; and him we ought to love and worſhip.——But our Creator himſelf, being abſolutely the firſt, and abſolutely ſupreme, Self-exiſtent and independent, the ſole Author and Lord of all Things, as well as infinitely glorious in himſelf, his Right to us is original, underived and moſt abſolute and entire. And therefore it is infinitely fit and ſuitable, that we ſhould be, in the conſtant Frame and Diſpoſition of our Hearts, abſolutely, entitely and wholly the Lord's, and that we ſhould for ever exert all our Powers, to the very utmoſt, to promote his Honour and Intereſt. And it is infinitely unreaſonable that we ſhould ever ſet up ourſelves, and be attached to any Intereſt of our own, ſeparate from his.—— And inaſmuch as he is infinitely better than we be, (Yea *all the Nations of the Earth, are leſs than nothing before him,*) and has ſuch an entire Right unto us, his Intereſt therefore ſhould be regarded as more valuable than our own, yea, infinitely more. For if our own Intereſt appears as valuable to us, as his; we ſet our ſelves upon a level with him, and claim as great a Right to our ſelves, as he has; and if his Intereſt does not appear as being of infinitely greater Value to us, than our own, we do not eſteem him as being infinitely better, than we be ourſelves, and his Right to us infinitely greater, than our own Right to our ſelves is.— It is therefore infinitely reaſonable, ſince God is what he is, and has ſuch a Right to us as he has, that we ſhould be conſtantly from the very bottom of our Hearts wholly his, and every Moment live wholly to him, and always have his Intereſt lie moſt near our Hearts, as being of infinitely more Worth Value and Importance than our own. As *Moſes*, who in a Meaſure was made Partaker of this divine Nature, in the Anguiſh of his Heart cries, when God tells him he will cut off *Iſrael*, and make of him a great Nation, "Lord, let my "Name be *blotted out of thy Book*, let it be forgotten from "among the living, and be never heard of again in the "World that ever I was in Being: *But what will become of*

"*thy*

" *thy great Name!*" God's Honour and Interest was dear to him; but he, comparatively, cared not for his own, *at all.* Exod. 32. Num. 14.

But this our Obligation to be entirely the Lord's, is still infinitely increased, if we consider the *Authority* of the supreme *Governour* of the World, which, by his express *Law*, has enjoined this upon us. It is not only infinitely fit in its own Nature, that we should love God with all our Hearts, considering what he is in himself, and that we should be entirely for him, in the Temper of our Minds, considering what an entire Right he has to us as his Creatures, who have received all we have from him, and are absolutely dependent on him for all we want; but God has, by *Law*, as *Governour* of the World, enjoined this upon us as our *Duty*, and that with all his *Authority*.—— And now considering what he is in himself, and the *natural Right* he has to all Things, and how entirely we are his, and absolutely under his Government, his AUTHORITY is infinitely binding.— Especially considering, how *infinitely engaged*, he appears to be, to see that his Law be *exactly* obeyed, in promising eternal Life on the one Hand, and threatning eternal Damnation on the other. This his *infinite Engagedness*, lays us under infinite Bonds, to be and do, *exactly* what he requires.

But still, our Obligation to love him with all our Hearts, and be wholly the Lord's, is yet infinitely more increased, if we consider what Ways the Lord has taken with us in this apostate World, since our Rebellion against him, since we have lost all Esteem of him, turned Enemies to him, cast off his Authority, and practically bid Defiance to his Power and Justice.— For instead of immediately dooming all this lower World to blackness of Darkness for ever, he has sent his Son, his only begotten Son, from Heaven, to bring us the News of Pardon and Peace, and by his own Death to open a Way for our Return unto him, and to call and invite us to return.— And now with a liberal Hand he strews common Mercies all round the World, among evil, unthankful, guilty, Hell-deserving Rebels, and fills the Hearts of all with Food and Gladness; and sends forth his Messengers to proclaim it to the Ends of the Earth, that it is his Will,

that all his rebellious Creatures lay down their Weapons of Rebellion, acknowledge the Law by which they ſtand condemned, to be holy, juſt and good, and look to him thro' Jeſus Chriſt for Pardon as a free Gift, and thro' Jeſus Chriſt return unto him, and give up themſelves to him entirely, to love him and live to him, and delight in him for ever.

And while the World in general make light of all this, and go to their Farms, and to their Merchandize, and many are enraged and cry out againſt the Meſſengers of Peace, and ſtone ſome and kill others; (*Matt.* 22.) that *now* he ſhould of his own ſovereign good Pleaſure, according to his eternal Purpoſe, ſeize here and there one, by his All-conquering Grace, and ſtop them in their Career to Hell, and make them ſee and feel their Sin and Guilt, and own the Sentence juſt by which they ſtand condemned, and bring them as upon their Knees to look to free Grace thro' Jeſus Chriſt for a Pardon, and thro' Jeſus Chriſt to give up themſelves for ever to him: that *now* he ſhould receive them to Favour, and put them among his Children, and become their Father, and their God, in an everlaſting Covenant, and undertake to teach and lead, to quicken and ſtrengthen, to correct and comfort, and ſo to humble and purify and ſanctify, and fit them for his heavenly Kingdom; and while they are in this World, to give them all Things that are beſt for them, and make all Things work together for their Good, and finally bring them unto, and poſſeſs them of eternal Glory and Bleſſedneſs in the full Enjoyment of himſelf for ever:— For a *God* of *infinite Greatneſs* and *Glory*, to deal *juſt ſo*, with *juſt ſuch Creatures*, is the moſt amazing and aſtoniſhing Grace; and lays *infinite Bonds* upon Believers to love the Lord their God with all their Hearts, and to live to him for ever; and has the greateſt Tendency to animate them ſo to do.—— And thus by theſe brief Hints we have a general View of the additional Motives of a true and genuine Love to God.

As God's bringing up the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, leading them thro' the Wilderneſs, driving out the Heathen from before them, and giving them that good Land which flowed with Milk and Honey, and covenanting to be their God, is uſed ſo frequently, by *Moſes* and the *Prophets*, throughout

throughout all the old Testament, as a Motive to engage them to cleave to the Lord, and to him only and entirely and for ever: So God's sending his Son into the World, to save his People from their Sins, their spiritual Bondage, together with all the spiritual and everlasting Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, are continually used in the new Testament, as Arguments to engage Believers not to live to themselves, but to him that died for them.——— Only here let these Things be remembred,

(1.) That a Sight and Sense of the infinite *Greatness* and *Glory* of God, from whom all Good comes, and a Sense of their own infinite Meanness and Unworthiness, makes all the Mercies they receive infinitely the more *endearing* and *engaging*. For the *Mercies themselves* now appear unspeakably the *greater*, in that they come from *such a God* and *to such Creatures*; and the *infinite Goodness* of God shines the *brighter* in every Mercy, and the *Freeness* of his *Grace* is the *more* conspicuous, on account of which he is infinitely amiable. The infinite Greatness and Glory of God in *general* ravishes the Heart, the infinite moral Beauty of the divine Goodness and Grace in *particular* ravishes the Heart, and now that *such a God* should shew *such Kindnesses* to *such a Creature* is very affecting. *Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my House, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* Says holy *David*—*And is this the Manner of Men, O Lord God!*— No surely.—*Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: For there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee.* 2 *Sam.* 7. 18—20. ——God is loved for the Kindnesses bestowed; but he is *more* loved for the infinite Beauty of that Goodness which is displayed in the bestowment of them, and for his being altogether such a one as he is. So the *Queen* of *Sheba* esteemed *Solomon* for the Kindnesses he shewed her, but primarily and much more for his own personal Excellencies. And his personal Excellencies made her esteem his Favours to her of much greater Worth.— That a *glorious* and *ever-blessed* God should treat Sinners so, is infinitely endearing.——— Now these Sensations which a true Believer has, and his Love to God arising therefrom, must be vastly different from every Thing which natural

Men experience, who know not God, and have no higher Principle in them than Self-love.

(2.) Let it also be remembred, that God *designs*, by all his Dealings and Kindnesses to his People, to bring them *nearer to himself* in this World, and to the *everlasting Enjoyment of himself* in the World to come. He means for the present to humble them, and wean them from the World, to make them more spiritually-minded and heavenly-minded, to bring them to be more acquainted with God and more entirely to take up their Rest and Contentment in Him; and therefore all Things are calculated by his infinite Wisdom and Goodness to attain this End. And this causes all the wise and kind Dealings of God, outwardly in his Providence and inwardly by his Spirit, and that both by Way of Correction as well as by Way of Consolation, to appear in a very affecting and engaging Light to true Believers.—While they see what God is in himself, and his infinite Beauty in being such; while they see how infinitely sufficient he is to be all Things to them, and to do all Things for them, and the Blessedness of living wholly upon him and trusting wholly in him; while they see God calculating all Things to bring them to him, and actually find all Things working this Way; their Obligations to love him and live to him appear infinitely binding, and their Hearts are mightily engaged and animated.——This View of Things make all their Afflictions appear as great Mercies; because they are so wisely calculated to bring them near to God. *Psal.* 119. 71. This View of Things adds an infinite Value to all the Kindnesses of God, over and above what they are worth merely in themselves, because they are all so wisely calculated to bring them near to God. This is the Kernel of all that tender-Mercy and Loving-Kindness which they see in all their Afflictions, and in all their Comforts. *Heb.* 12. 10, 11. *Rom.* 8. 28.—To be brought near to God, is worth more than all the World; there is no Portion like God, no Comfort like that which is to be taken in him: He is the godly Man's ALL. Psal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is nothing on Earth I desire besides thee.*—— And now that such a *God* should take *such Methods*, with *just such a Creature*, to bring him

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to the Possession of *such a Good*, is the most amazing Goodness and the most astonishing Grace.— Now here is a Sense of the Excellency of the divine Nature in *general*, and a Sense of the moral Beauty of the divine Goodness in *particular*, and of the *unspeakable Mercy* God shews to them, which *Mercy*, is *infinitely magnified* in their Account, from the *Value* they have for God, as the *Portion* of their Souls, from all which, their Love to God takes its Rise: Whereby their Love appears to be exceeding different from any Thing which natural Men experience, who neither know God, nor relish Communion with him, but are contrary to Him in all Things: And only from Self-love are glad of the good Things they receive from God, which good Things they live upon and make a God of: Whether they be worldly good Things, or great Light and Comfort and Joy of a religious Nature.

(3.) Let it also be remembred, that all God's Gifts to his People are so many Talents bestowed upon them *ultimately to be improved for God*, whereby they are put under *Advantages to glorify God and do Good in the World.* And the more they have of worldly Substance, of natural Powers, of acquired Accomplishments, and of the gracious Influences of the holy Spirit, *&c.* the greater are their Advantages to act for God, to promote his Honour and Interest, and to do Good.—— Now in Proportion as they love God, in the same Proportion is his Honour and Interest, and the Good and Welfare of his Creatures and Subjects, dear unto them.— The Interest and Honour of God lies nearer to the Hearts of his People, than their Parents, or Consorts, or Children, or Houses and Lands, yea, than their own Lives. (*Luk.* 14. 26.)—To be under Advantages therefore to promote his Honour and Interest, must, in their Account, be esteemed an inestimable Priviledge.—— Hence they love God for all Things they receive from Him, *because* by all they are put under such Advantages to live to him and serve him, seeking his Interest and Honour and Glory. A remarkable Instance of which we have in *Ezra*, that hearty Friend to God, and to his Honour and Interest. See *Ezr.* 7. *v.* 27, 28. compared with the rest of the *Chapter.*— Now herein again their Love to God for his Benefits is evidently

different from any Thing which natural Men experience, who have no higher Principle than Self-love, and are entirely actuated by it.

And as the Love of the Saint and of the Hypocrite thus greatly differ in their *Nature*, so do they also differ as greatly in their *Fruits* and *Effects*. *Ezra* loved God greatly for his Kindnesses to him, because thereby he was put under Advantages to do so much for God's Glory and for the Good of his People. And now see how active he is for God, and how he exerts himself to do Good, and to reform every Thing that was amiss among the Jews; from the *eighth Chapter* and on. While the hypocritical Jews, who, no doubt, were also greatly affected with the Mercy of God in their Deliverance from their long Captivity, were so far from being active for God, that they, not caring for his Honour or his Laws, committed great Abominations. *Ezr.* 9. 1. So the *Children of Israel* at the Red-Sea seemed to be full of Love to God, as well as *Moses*; but as they had different Sorts of Love, so their Carriage did as greatly differ afterwards, for the Course of forty Years. And no wonder, for the hypocritical *Israelites* only loved themselves, and cared only for their own Interest; but *Moses* loved God, and cared above all Things for his Honour.

Thus we see, not only what additional Obligations Believers are under to love God with all their Hearts, but also how, and in what Manner, they influence and excite them so to do.—— And what I have offered effectually obviates the common Plea of Formalists and all Self-seekers, *That all the Saints in Scripture are represented as loving God for his Benefits*; whence they argue, that they are right, and their Religion genuine, which results merely from Self-love, and the fear of Hell and hope of Heaven, or from a confident Perswasion that their Sins are pardoned.— For it is evident, that true Saints do not love God for his Benefits, nor eye their own Happiness, in the same Manner that such Men do, but in a Manner altogether different.—— Saints know the God they love, and love him primarily for what he is in himself, and because he is just what he is: But Hypocrites know not God, nor love him, but are in all Things contrary to him, and are only pleased with the false

false Image of God they have framed in their Fancies, merely because they think that he loves them, and has done, and will do, great Things for them.— Saints are affected with the divine Goodness it self for the moral Beauty there is in it: But Hypocrites are affected only with the Fruits and Effects of divine Goodness to them, as tending to make them happy.— Saints love God for his Benefits, under a real Sense of their infinite Unworthiness of the least of them: But so it is not with the Hypocrites.— Saints love God for all the Streams of divine Goodness, because they are designed and actually do lead them up to God the Fountain, who is the Portion of their Souls: But Hypocrites live upon the Streams, disrelishing the Fountain.— Saints love God dearly for all his Gifts, because by them they are put under such Advantages to live to God, to promote his Interest and Honour, and to do good in the World: But Hypocrites are confined within the narrow Circle *Self*.—— Saints Love to God animates them to live to God, and to exert themselves to promote his Honour and Interest, and to do all the Good they can: but the Hypocrite after all his pretended Love to God, cares not what becomes of his Interest and Honour, if it may but go well with him, his Friends and Party.— So that while true Saints love God for his Benefits, they act in a *gracious* Manner, conformable to the Law of God, and to the Reason and Nature of Things; whereas all the Love of the most refined Hypocrite is merely the workings of a natural Self-love, in a Manner directly contrary to the Law of God, and to the Reason and Nature of Things; and is nothing but mere Mockery. *Psal.* 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. *Zech.* 7. 5, 6.

Thus we have gone thro' the two first *general Heads*, and see *what is implied in Love to God*, and *from what Motives we ought to love him.* And from the whole we may learn so much of the Nature of true Religion, as that with much Evidence and Certainty we may conclude,

First, *That all that seeming Love to God is Counterfeit, which arises meerly from Men's Corruptions being gratified.* As when ambitious Men are by God's Providence raised to high Degrees of Honour, and worldly Men are prospered in all which they put their Hands unto; and herefrom

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the one and the other rejoyce and bleſs God, and ſeem to love him, and verily think they are ſincere.— This is all Hypocriſy. For in truth they only love their Corruptions, and are glad they are gratified. And accordingly inſtead of improving all their Riches and Honour for God, to advance his Intereſt and Honour in the World, they improve all only for themſelves, to promote their own Ends; and care not what becomes of God's Honour and Intereſt and Kingdom; and commonly ſuch Men ſhew themſelves the greateſt Enemies to the Cauſe of God and to the Religion of Chriſt. And ſhould God but *touch all they have, they would curſe him to his Face.*

Secondly, We may be equally certain, *that all that ſeeming Love to God is Counterfeit, that ariſes merely from a Legal, Self-righteous Spirit.* As when a Man, only becauſe he is afraid of Hell and has a Mind to be ſaved, ſets himſelf to repent and reform and do Duties, and tries to love God and aim at his Glory, to the Intent that he may make ſome Amends for paſt Sins and recommend himſelf to the divine Favour, and ſo to eſcape Hell and obtain Heaven.— And when he has grown ſo good, as to have raiſed Hopes of attaining his End, he is raviſhed at the Thoughts, and rejoyces, and bleſſes the Lord, and loves him.— It is plain, all this is Hypocriſy. For the Man in truth only loves himſelf, and is concerned merely for his own Intereſt; but does not care at all for God, his Glory or Honour. For if there were no Heaven nor Hell, ſuch would ſerve God no more. Children will work for their Parents without being hired, becauſe they love them; but Hirelings will not ſtrike a Stroke, if there is no Money to be got; becauſe they care for nothing but their own Intereſt. Hence this Sort of Hypocrites are wont to ſay, that if they once believed that God had made no Promiſes to the beſt they can do, they would never do more.— And farther, 'tis plainly all Hypocriſy, for if their Conſciences but fall aſleep, ſo that they are troubled no more with the Thoughts of another World, they will leave off their Duties, let down their Watch, break all their Reſolutions, and be as bad as ever: and hence their Doctrine of falling from Grace probably took its Riſe.—— And their Hypocriſy is ſtill more evident,

evident, in that they are commonly so much concerned to find out what the least Measure of saving Grace is, and so strenuous in pleading for great Abatements in the Law. For from hence it is plain, that all they are after is only to get just Grace enough to carry them to Heaven; as a lazy Hireling that is for doing but only just Work enough to pass for a Day's Work, that he may get his Wages at Night, which is all he wants.

THIRDLY, We may be as certain, *That all that seeming Love is Counterfeit, which arises merely from a strong Confidence which a Man has, that his Sins are pardoned, and that Christ loves him, and will save him.* As when a Man is under great Terrors, and has fearful Apprehensions of Hell and Damnation, and is ready even to give up himself for lost; but suddenly great Light breaks into his Mind, he sees Christ with his Arms open and smiling, and it may be his Blood running, and hears him as it were say, *Be of good Chear, thy Sins are forgiven thee,—I have loved thee with an everlasting Love,— Come thou blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom*;— And now he is certain that his Sins are pardoned, and that Heaven is his, and he is even ravish't with Joy, and calls upon all to praise the Lord.— For all this proceeds merely from Self-love, and there is no Love to God in it. For all this Love arises from his false Confidence, and not from any true Knowledge of God. And commonly such turn out as the *Israelites* did, *who sang God's Praise* at the *Red-Sea*, when *Pharaoh* and his Hosts were drowned, and they delivered, and their Hopes of getting to *Canaan* highly raised; *but they soon forgat his Works*, and rebelled against him, and their Carcases fell in the Wilderness. They loved *themselves*, and therefore they rejoyced at their wonderful Deliverance; and they loved *themselves*, and therefore they murmured three Days after, when they came to the bitter Waters. Their Joys and their Murmurings proceeded from the very same Principle, under different Circumstances; but the Love of God was not in them. And just this is the Case here.—And this is commonly the Event, that the Fears of Hell being now over, their Joys gradually abate, and they grow more and more secure, till after a while they return to Folly, as the Dog to his Vomit,

and

and as the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the Mire: and so are as bad and sometimes worse than ever. (2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21, 22.)— And now they plead, that the best are dead sometimes, and that *David* and *Peter* had their Falls, and so keep their Consciences as quiet as they can: and thus they live along whole Months and Years together.

Fourthly, and lastly, We may also be certain, *That all that seeming Love to God, which arises merely from the gratification of spiritual Pride, is Counterfeit.* As when Men dream Dreams, see Visions, and hear Voices, and have Impressions and Revelations, whereby they are set up in their own Esteem, and in the Opinion of others, for some of the most peculiar Favourites of Heaven, and very best Men in all the World; and hence they rejoyce and bless God and mightily love him. But in Truth they are only ravish't with Self-conceit, and feel blessedly to think themselves some of the best Men in the World, and to think they shall shortly sit at the right Hand of Christ in Heaven among the Apostles and Martyrs, while their Persecutors and Haters will be burning in Hell. But they neither know God nor love him; and for the most Part, by heretical Doctrines, or wicked Lives, or both, are a scandal to Religion.— These are so far from being truly religious, that *they are the very Tares which the Devil sows.* Matt. 13. 39.

In each of these Sorts of Love there are these three Defects or Faults. (1.) They have no true *Knowledge* of God. And so (2.) They only love *themselves.* And (3.) Their seeming Love to God arises from a *Mistake.*—— The ambitious and worldly Man thinks himself very happy, because he rises in Honour and Estate.—The Legalist thinks, that God loves him and will save him for his Duties.—The next firmly believes, that his Sins are pardoned.— And the last, that God looks upon him one of the best Men in the World. But all are wofully mistaken: and when at the Day of Judgment they come to see their Mistake, their Love to God will vanish away, and they turn everlasting Haters and Blasphemers of the most High.— And another Defect in these & all other Sorts of counterfeit Love, is, that they none of them will ever make Men *truly obedient.* For when Men's seeming Love to God is nothing but Self-love in

in another Shape, all their seeming Obedience will in reality be nothing but Self-seeking. They may pretend to be the Servants of God, but will only mean ultimately to serve themselves.

Section III.

Concerning the Measure of Love to God required in the divine Law.

I proceed now to the next Thing proposed, which was, III. To shew, *what is that* Measure *of Love to God, which the Law requires of all Mankind.*—— And our blessed Saviour clears up this Point in the most plain and familiar Language. *Thou shall love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind*; and it is added in *Mark* 12. 30. *With all thy Strength.* i. e. in other Worlds, we ought to love God in a Measure exactly proportionable to the Largeness of our natural Powers and Faculties. Which to do, is all that Perfection which God ever required of any of his Creatures. *

When the Law requires us to love God with *all our Hearts*, it either means, to the utmost extent of our *natural* Capacity,

* The Law runs thus, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with ALL thy Heart*, &c. *and thy Neighbour AS thy self.* God is to have the *highest Degree* of Love we are capable of; but a *much less* Degree is due to to our selves and Neighbours. So that according to the Tenor of the Law, our Love to God is to be *greater* and *more fervent*, than our Love to our selves. And therefore the Law does suppose that God is worthy of our supreme Love for what he is in himself, antecedent to any selfish Consideration, from a Sight and Sense of which *Worthiness* our Love to God is primarily to take its Rise. For in the Nature of Things, it would be impossible for us, from Self-love, to love God *more* than ourselves. —— Or thus, the Law requires us to love God *more* than ourselves; but in the Nature of Things it is impossible that merely from Self-love we should love God more than our selves: therefore the Law supposes that there is something in God to excite our Love antecedent to any selfish Consideration, and that our Love to him is not to proceed meerly from Self-love. For otherwise the Law requires us to do that which in its own Nature is absolutely impossible. —— And this by the Way, may serve still further to confirm the Truth of what has been before said.

Capacity, or else only to the utmost extent of our *moral* Capacity. *i. e.* only so much as we are *inclined* to. And then the less we are inclined to love God, the less Love is required; and so if we have no Heart, no Inclination to love him, then no Love at all is required. And according to this Rule, the carnal Mind which is Enmity against God, is not *in Duty bound* to be subject to the Law, neither indeed can be. And where there is no Law, there is no Transgression. Where there is no Duty required, there can be no Sin committed. And so the vilest of Mortals are the freest from Sin, and the least to blame; which is the grossest Absurdity. —— When therefore the Law requires us to love God with *all our Hearts*, it has no Reference to our *moral Inclination*, but only to our *natural Capacity*. And indeed nothing can be more unreasonable, than to suppose, that the Law only requires us to love God, so far as we have a Heart and Disposition to do so; for this would leave us entirely at Liberty, to do otherwise, if we were so inclined, and in effect it would make the Law say, *If you feel inclined to love God, more or less, so far it is your Duty, but farther you are not bound, but are at your Liberty.* i. e. the Law is not binding, any farther than you are inclined to obey it. *i. e.* in reality it is *no Law*, but every Man is left to do as he pleases.— The *whole Heart* therefore does the Law mean to require, let our Temper, Inclination, or Disposition be what it will.

God the great Author of all Things has been pleased to create intelligent Beings of *different* Sizes, some of a higher Rank, and some of a lower, some of greater Capacities and some of less. Some are Angels, and some are Men. And among the Angels some are of larger natural Powers, and some of smaller. So it is among the good Angels, and so it is among the evil Angels. There are Angels and Archangels, that is, Beings of various natural Powers and Capacities, among the good and bad. And so it is among Men, among good and bad, there is a very great Variety, some have larger Souls than others.

Intelligent Beings are capable of a *Degree* of Knowledge and Love exactly *proportionable* to their *natural* Powers. Angels are capable of a Degree of Knowledge and Love greater

greater than Men: And one Man of a greaterDegree than another. As they are ofdifferentSizes, of larger and smaller natural Powers, so their Capacities to know and love are some greater, and some less. So it is among good and bad.

All that *Perfection*, which God requires of any of his Creatures, is a Measure of Knowledge and Love bearing an *exact Proportion* to their *natural* Abilities. Since God has manifested what he is, in his Works and Ways, and since he is infinitely glorious in being what he is, and has an original and entire Right to his intelligent Creatures; therefore he requires all Angels and Men to attend diligently to the Discoveries which he has made of himself, and learn what he is, and behold his Glory, and love him with all their Hearts. This is the Extent of what God requires of the highest Angel in Heaven, and this is exactly what he requires of all the Children of Men upon Earth.

The Law requires *no more* than this of Mankind under a Notion that their natural Powers are lessened by the Fall. Whether we are Beings of as large natural Powers as we should have been, had we never apostatized from God, or no, yet this is plain, we are no where in Scripture blamed for having no larger natural Powers, nor is any more ever required than *all the Heart* and *all the Soul* and *all theMind* and *all the Strength*. This is evident thro' the whole Bible.

And the Law requires *no less* of Mankind under a Notion that they are turned Enemies to God and have no Heart or Inclination to love him. Be it so, that Mankind are ever so averse to attend to those Manifestations, which God has made of himself, and ever so averse to take in right Notions of God, and ever so far from a Disposition to account him infinitely glorious in being what he is, and from an Inclination to love him with all their Hearts; yet the divine Law makes no Allowances, no Abatements, but insists upon the same, the very same it ever did. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart.*

Indeed, some do dream, that the Law is very much abated.—But what saith the Scriptures as to this Point? Does the Word of God teach us that there is any Abatement made? Where do we read of it? Where is it plainly asserted, or in what Texts is it implied? Truly I know nothing

nothing like it in all Bible, nor what Text of Scripture this Notion can be built upon.— And beſides, if the Law is abated, *when* was it abated?— Was it abated immediately upon *Adam*'s Fall? Surely no. For, above two Thouſand Years after from Mount *Sinai* God declared, that he required ſinleſs Perfection, and threatned a Curſe againſt the Man that ſhould fail in the leaſt Point. *Exod.* 20. *Deut.* 27. 26.—Was it abated upon Chriſt's coming into the World? Surely no. For he in the ſtrongeſt Terms taught his Diſciples that it was in full Force, and that it was their Duty to be perfectly holy, and that in deſigned Oppoſition to the Doctrine of the *Phariſees*, who in effect held that the Law was abated. *Matt.* 5. 17—48.—— Was it abated after Chriſt's Death and Reſurrection? Surely no. For St. *Paul* always taught that the Chriſtian Scheme of Religion, which he preached, did not make void, but rather eſtabliſh the Law. *Rom.* 3. 31. and St. *James* inſiſted upon it, that it muſt not be broke in any one Point. *Jam.* 2. 10.—When was it abated therefore? Why, ſays Chriſt, *Till Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, one Jot or Tittle of the Law ſhall in no wiſe fail.* Mat. 5. 18.—— And beſides, if the Law is abated, *in what Particular*, is it abated? And *how great* are the Abatements?— Are there any Abatements made in our Duty to God? Surely no; for we are ſtill required to love him with all our Hearts, and more than this never was demanded.—Or are any Abatements made in our Duty to our fellow-Men? Surely no. For we are ſtill required to love our Neighbour as our ſelves, and more than this never was enjoined.—Or is there any Abatement made in the internal Part of our Duty? Surely no. For the whole Heart is ſtill required, and more than this never was inſiſted upon.—Or finally, is there any Abatement made in the external Part of our Duty? Surely no. For we are ſtill required to be *holy in all Manner of Converſation, as he that has called us is Holy.* (1 Pet. 1. 15.) And more than this was never required. So that from the whole, we have as much Reaſon to think, that the Law requires ſinleſs Perfection *now*, as that *ever* it did. Yea, this Point cannot be plainer than it is; for the Law, in fact, is the very ſame it was from the Beginning, Word for Word, without the leaſt Alteration.

Thou

Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, &c. *And thy Neighbour as thy self.* So that if it *ever* did require sinless Pefection, it does *now*.

The highest Pitch of Holiness, the Saints in *Heaven* will ever arrive to, will only be to love God with *all* their Hearts; and exactly the very same is required of every Man upon *Earth*. And it was because St. *Paul* understood the Law in this Sense, that he had always such a mean and low Opinion of all his Attainments: for while he compared what he *was*, with what he *ought to be*, he plainly saw how the Case stood: And therefore he says, *The Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under Sin. O wretched Man that I am!* Rom. 7. 14, 24.

So that upon the whole, this seems to be the true State of the Case: As there are various Capacities among all intelligent Creatures in general, so there are among Men in particular, Souls of various Sizes, some of larger natural Capacities, and some of smaller. But Souls of different Capacities, are capable of different Degrees of Love. A Degree of Love exactly equal to the natural Capacity of the Soul, is Perfection: And this is what the Law requires, nor more, nor less: *all* the Heart, *all* the Soul, *all* the Mind, *all* the Strength. The Saints and Angels in Heaven do love God thus, and hence they are perfect in Holiness; and so far as we fall short of this, we are sinful. This is the exact Rule of Duty.

And now, this Law is *holy, just, and good.* The Thing required is in its own Nature right and fit and suitable. God is worthy to be loved with our whole Hearts, and this is just what is required. 'Tis right we should have a Degree of Love to our selves, and 'tis right we should love our Neighbours *as our selves*, but it is fit we should love God with *all our Hearts*. Considering what he is, and what we be, it is in its own Nature infinitely fit and right; and not to do so, infinitely unfit and wrong.— Indeed, God is worthy of an infinitely greater Degree of Love than we or any of his Creatures are capable of. He only is capable of a compleat View of his own infinite Glory, and of a full Sense of his own infinite Beauty, and of a Love perfectly adequate to his own Loveliness. And he does not require

or expect any of his Creatures to love him, to that Degree he loves himself. Only as he loves himself with *all his* Heart, so he requires and expects that they love him with *all their* Hearts. And there being the same Reason for one as for the other, the Law is therefore in its own Nature perfectly *right* and *just* and *equal*.— Indeed, had God required the most exalted of his intelligent Creatures to have loved him in the same *Degree* that he himself does, then the Thing required would in its own Nature have been absolutely impossible, and what he could have no Reason to expect. Or if he had required the meanest of his intelligent Creatures to have loved him in the same *Degree* that *Gabriel* does, it would have been a Thing *naturally* impossible. But now he only requires every one to love him with *all their Hearts*, this is *right*, perfectly *right*, *just* and *equal*. Less than this could not, in Justice, have been required of each one; in Justice, I mean, to the Deity, who ought to have his Due from each one, and whose proper Right, the Governour of the World, ought to assert and maintain.

Thus we see the Law is exactly upon a Level with our *natural* Capacities; it *only* requires us to love God with *all* our Hearts: and thus we see, that the Law is therefore perfectly reasonable, just and equal. Deut. 10. 12. *And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his Ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with ALL thy Heart, and with ALL thy Soul?*

Hence, as to a *natural* Capacity, all Mankind are *capable* of a perfect Conformity to this Law. For the Law requires of no Man any more than to love God with *all his Heart*. The sinning Angels have the same *natural* Capacities now as they had before they fell; they have the same *Faculties*, called the *Understanding* and *Will*; they are still the same Beings as to their *natural* Powers. Once they loved God with *all their Hearts*; and now they hate him with *all their Hearts*. Once they had a great Degree of Love; now they have as great a Degree of Hatred. So that they have the same natural Capacities now as ever. Their *Temper* indeed is different; but their *Capacity* is the same. And therefore as to a *natural Capacity*,

city, they are as *capable* of a perfect Conformity to the Law of their Creator as ever they were. So *Adam*, after his Fall, had the same Soul that he had before, as to its *natural Capacities*, tho' of a very different *Temper*. And therefore in that Respect, was as *capable* of a perfect Conformity to this Law, as ever.— And it's plainly the Case, that all Mankind, as to their *natural* Capacities, are *capable* of a perfect Conformity to the Law, from *this*, that when Sinners are converted they have no new *natural* Faculties, tho' they have a *new Temper*. And when they come to love God with all their Hearts in Heaven, still they will have the *same Hearts*, as to their *natural* Faculties, and may in this Respect be justly looked upon as the very same Beings. In this Sense, *Paul* was the same Man when he hated and persecuted Christ, as when he loved him and died for him: and that *same Heart* that was once so full of Malice, is now as full of Love: So that, as to his *natural* Capacities, he was as *capable* of a perfect Conformity to this Law, when he was a Persecutor, as he is now in Heaven.—— When therefore Men cry out against the holy Law of God, which requires us only to love him with *all our Hearts*, and say, "It is not *just* for God to *require* more than we *can* do, "and then threaten to damn us for not doing," they ought to stay a while and consider what they say, and tell what they mean by their CAN DO; for it is plain, that the Law is exactly upon a Level with our *natural* Capacities, and that in this Respect we are *fully capable* of a perfect Conformity thereto. And it will be impossible for us to excuse our selves by an *Inability* arising from *any other* Quarter; as will presently appear. For to return,

From what has been said we may learn, that there can be nothing to render it, in any Measure, a *hard* and *difficult* Thing, to love God with all our Hearts, but our being destitute of a *right Temper* of Mind, and having a *Temper* that is *wrong*: and that therefore we are *perfectly inexcusable*, and *altogether* and *wholly* to *blame*, that we do not.

OBJ. *But I do not know God; how therefore can I love him?*

ANS. Were you of a *right Temper*, it would be your *Nature*, above all Things, to attend to those Discoveries, which he has made of himself, in his Works and in his

Word; you would ſearch for the Knowledge of him as Men ſearch for Silver, and as they dig for hid Treaſure: And were you of a *right Temper*, it would be *natural*, to take in that very Repreſentation which God has made of himſelf.— And now was it but your Nature, to attend, with all your Heart, to the Diſcoveries which God has made of himſelf; and your Nature, to take in right Notions of him, it would be impoſſible, but that you ſhould know *what God is:* becauſe he has *acted out* all his Perfections ſo much to the Life, and *exhibited* ſuch an *exact* Image of himſelf. The Works of Creation and Redemption, and all his Conduct as moral Governour of the World, ſhew juſt what a kind of Being he is. He has diſcovered his infinite Underſtanding and almighty Power, and he has ſhewn the Temper of his Heart, and all in ſo plain a Manner, that were it your Nature to attend and conſider and take in right Notions, it is quite impoſſible, but that you ſhould know and ſee plainly *what God is.*

Obj. *But if I have right Notions of what God is, yet I cannot ſee his Glory and Beauty, in being ſuch; how therefore can I love him?*

Ans. Were you of a *right Temper*, it would be your *Nature* to account him infinitely glorious in being what he is. As it is the Nature of an ambitious Man to ſee a Glory in Applauſe, and of a worldly Man to ſee a Glory in the Things of the World: So it would be your Nature, to ſee a Glory in God. For what ſuits our Hearts, naturally appears excellent in our Eyes. (*Joh.* 8. 42, 47.)

Obj. *But I feel that I cannot love him; how therefore am I wholly to Blame?*

Ans. The Fault is in him, or in you. Either he is not lovely, or elſe you are of a very bad Temper: but he is infinitely lovely; and therefore it is only owing to the bad Temper of your Heart, and to your being deſtitute of a right Temper, that you cannot love him; and you therefore are wholly to Blame. Indeed you could not but love him, were you not a very ſordid Wretch.

Obj. *But to love God, or to have any Diſpoſition to love him, is a Thing SUPERNATURAL, clean beyond the Powers of Nature improved to the utmoſt: how can I therefore be wholly to Blame?*

Ans.

ANS. It is a Thing *supernatural*, you say ; *i. e.* in other Words, you have *no Heart to it*, nor the least Inclination that Way, nor is there any Thing in your Temper to work upon by Motives to bring you to it: and now because you are so very bad a Creature, therefore you are not at all to Blame. This is your Argument. But can you think that there is any Force in it? What! Are moral Agents, the less to blame, the worse they grow? And are God's Laws no longer binding, than while his Subjects are disposed to obey them?

OBJ. *But after all I must needs reply, as* Nicodemus *in another Case, How can these Things be?*

ANS. Why did not the *Jews* love their Prophets, and love Christ and his Apostles? What was it owing to? And where did the Blame lie? They were acquainted with them, heard them talk and preach, and saw their Conduct, and could not but plainly perceive their Temper, and know what Sort of a Disposition they were of, and what Sort of Men they were. And yet they did not like them, but they hated them, they belied them, slandered and reproached them, and put them to Death. And now what was the Matter? What was the Cause of all this?—Were not their Prophets, and Christ and his Apostles indeed lovely and worthy of their hearty Esteem? Did not all that they said and did, manifest them to be so? Why then did they not love them? Was it not wholly owing to their not having a right Temper of Mind, and to their being of so bad a Disposition? And were they not wholly to Blame?—They might say of Christ, *That they could see no Form nor Comeliness in him, wherefore they should desire him:* And where no *Beauty* is seen, it is impossible there should be any *Love*. But why did not he appear most amiable in their Eyes? And why were their Hearts not ravish'd with his Beauty? His *Disciples* loved him, and *Martha* and *Mary* and *Lazarus* loved him, and why did not the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* love him as much? Why, because his Person and Doctrines did not suit them, and were not agreeable to the *Temper* of their Hearts. The bad Temper of their Hearts made him appear odious in their Eyes, and was the Cause of all their Ill-will towards him. And now, were they not

to *blame* for this bad Temper, and for all this their bad Feelings, and bad Carriage towards Chriſt thence ariſing? Yes, ſurely, if ever any Men were to blame for any Thing.— And now if God the Father had been in the ſame Circumſtances as God the Son was then in, he would not have been loved a Jot more or treated any Whit better than he was. Indeed it was that Image and Reſemblance of the infinitely glorious and bleſſed God, which was to be ſeen in their Prophets, in Chriſt and his Apoſtles, which was the very Thing they hated them for. Therefore Chriſt ſays, *He that hateth me, hateth my Father alſo.— But now have they both ſeen and hated, both me and my Father.* (Joh. 15. 23, 24.) And Chriſt attributes it entirely to their want of a right Temper, and to the bad Diſpoſition of their Hearts, that they did not love him & love his Doctrines. *If God were your Father, you would love me.* (Joh. 8. 42.) *He that is of God* (of a God-like Temper) *heareth God's Words: ye therefore hear them not, becauſe ye are not of God.* (℣. 47.) In Truth, the Bottom of all your Enmity is, *that you are of your Father the Devil*, i. e. of juſt ſuch a Temper as he. (℣. 44.) And now, what think you, when Chriſt comes in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on an ungodly World, will he blame the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* for not loving him with all their Hearts, or no? Or will he excuſe the Matter, and ſay on their Behalf, *They could ſee no Form nor Comelineſs in me, I appeared very odious to them, they could not love me, they could not but hate me, and no Man is to blame for not doing more than he CAN?*——

From the whole it is plain, that Mankind are to blame, wholly to blame, and perfectly inexcuſable, for their not having right Apprehenſions of God, and for their not having a Senſe of his Glory in being what he is, and for their not loving him with all their Hearts; becauſe all is owing meerly to their want of a right Temper, and to the bad Diſpoſition of their Hearts.

Indeed, if we were altogether of ſuch a Temper, Frame and Diſpoſition of Heart as we ought to be, it would be altogether as eaſy and natural to love God with all our Hearts, as it is for the moſt dutiful Child to love a tender and valuable Parent. For God is really infinitely amiable; and were we

we of such a Temper, he would appear so in our Eyes; and did he appear so in our Eyes, we could not but love him with all our Hearts, & delight in him with all our Souls; and it would be most easy & natural so to do. For no Man ever found any Difficulty in loving that which appears very amiable in his Eyes. For the Proof of which I appeal to the Experience of all Mankind.—And now, why does not God appear infinitely amiable in our Eyes? Is it because he has not clearly revealed *what he is*, in his Works and in his Word? Surely no. For the Revelation is plain enough. Is it because he is not infinitely amiable in being what he is? Surely no. For all Heaven are ravished with his infinite Beauty. What is it then that makes us blind to the infinite Excellency of the divine Nature? Why, it can be owing to nothing, but to a bad Temper of Mind in us, and to our not being of such a Disposition as we ought to be. For I appeal to the Experience of all Mankind, whether those Persons and Things, which suit the Temper of their Hearts, do not naturally appear amiable in their Eyes.— And certainly if God does not suit the Temper of our Hearts, it is not owing to any Fault in him, but the Fault must be wholly in our selves. If the Temper and Disposition of God (*i. e.* his moral Perfections,) be not agreeable to our Temper and Disposition, most certainly our Temper and Disposition is very wrong. *If God were your Father, ye would love me:* but *ye are of your Father the Devil*, therefore you hate me. (*Joh.* 8. 42, 44.) *i. e.* "If you were of a Temper like God, ye would love me, but being of a contrary Temper, hence you hate me. If you were of a right Temper, I should appear amiable unto you; and it is wholly owing to your bad Temper, that I appear otherwise. *If ye were* Abraham's *Children, ye would do the Works of Abraham.*" (*v.* 39.)

Obj. *But be it so, yet I cannot help being of such a Temper as I am of; how therefore am I wholly to Blame?*

Ans. You have as much Power to help being of such a Temper, as the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had; but Christ judged them to be wholly to Blame, and altogether inexcusable. They *could not* like Christ or his Doctrine; *Ye CANNOT hear my Word*, says Christ. (*v.* 43.) but their *CANNOT*, their *Inability* was no Excuse to them in Christ's

Account: Becauſe all their Inability, he plainly ſaw, aroſe from their bad Temper, and their want of a good Diſpoſition. And altho' they had no more *Power* to help being of ſuch a Temper than you have, yet he judged them wholly to blame, and altogether inexcuſable. (*Joh.* 8. 33—47. *Joh.* 15. 22—25.) And now we know, that *his Judgment is according to Truth.*—— But in order to help you to ſee into the *Reaſon* of the Thing, I deſire you ſeriouſly and impartially to conſider,

1. That *Sinners are free and voluntary in their bad Temper.* A wicked World have diſcovered a very ſtrong Diſpoſition to hate God, even from the Beginning. And the *Jewiſh* Nation, God's own peculiar People, of whom, if of any, we might hope for better Things, were ſo averſe to God and his Ways, that they hated and murdered the Meſſengers which he ſent to reclaim them, and at laſt even murdered God's own Son.— And now, whence was all this? Why, from the exceeding bad and wicked Temper of their Hearts. *They have hated me without a Cauſe.* Joh. 15. 25.— But did any Body *force* them to be of ſuch a bad Temper? Surely no; they were *hearty* in it.—— Were they of ſuch a bad Temper *againſt their Wills?* Surely no; Their *Wills*, their *Hearts* were in it. Yea, they *loved* their bad Temper, and *loved* to *gratify* it; and hence were mightily pleaſed with their falſe Prophets, becauſe they always propheſied in their Favour, and *ſuited* and *gratified* their Diſpoſition. And they *hated* whatſoever was *diſagreable* to their bad Temper, and tended to *croſs* it; and hence were they ſo enraged at the preaching and the Perſons of their Prophets, of Chriſt and his Apoſtles. So that they were manifeſtly *voluntary* and *hearty* in their bad Temper. *We have loved Strangers and after them we WILL go.* Jer. 2. 25. But *as for the Word which thou haſt ſpoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we WILL NOT hearken unto thee.* Jer. 44. 16. *And the Lord God of their Fathers ſent to them by his Meſſengers, riſing up betimes, and ſending; becauſe he had Compaſſion on his People, and on his Dwelling-Place: but they mocked the Meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his Words, and miſuſed his Prophets*, &c. 2 Cron. 36. 15, 16.—— And ſo all wicked Men are as *voluntary* in their bad Temper as they were.

The

The Temper of the Mind is nothing but the *habitual Inclination* of the Heart. But an *involuntary Inclination* of the Heart is a Contradiction. And the stronger any Inclination is, the more full and free the Heart and Soul is in the Thing. Hence the bad *Temper* or the habitual bad Inclination of the Devil is at the farthest Distance from any Compulsion; he is most perfectly free and hearty in it. And all sinful Creatures being thus *voluntary*, *free* and *hearty* in the bad Temper of their Minds; or in other Words, the bad Temper of the Mind being nothing but the habitual *Inclination* of the *Heart*, hence all must be to Blame in a Degree equal to the Strength of their bad Inclination.— In a Word, if we were continually *forced* to be of such a bad Temper, *entirely against our Wills*, then we should not be to Blame; for it would not be at all the *Temper* of *our Hearts*: but so long as our bad Temper is nothing else but the habitual *Frame*, *Disposition* and *Inclination* of our OWN HEARTS, without any Manner of Compulsion, we are perfectly without Excuse, and that whether we *can help* being of such a Temper, or no. For,

2. *If a sinful Creature's not being able to help his being of a bad Temper, does in the least free him from Blame; then the more vile and sinful any Creature grows, the less to Blame will be be:* Because the more vile and sinful any Creature grows, the less able is he to help his being of so bad a Frame of Heart.— Thus, if a Man feels a bad Spirit towards one of his Neighbour's creeping into his Heart, perhaps if he immediately resists it, he may be able easily to overcome and suppress it; but if he gives Way to it, and suffers it to take strong hold of his Heart; if he cherishes it until it grows up into a settled Enmity, and keeps it in his Heart for twenty Years, seeking all Opportunities to gratify it, by backbiting, defaming, &c. it will now, perhaps, be clean out of his Power to get rid of it, and effectually root it out of his Heart. It will at least be a very difficult Thing.— Now the Man is talked to, and blamed for backbiting and defaming his Neighbour, Time after Time, and is urged to love his Neighbour as himself, but he says, *he cannot love him.*— But why can't you? For other Men love him.— *Why he appears in my Eyes the most odious and hateful Man in*

the

the World.—— Yes, but that is owing to your own bad Temper.— *Well, but I can't help my Temper, and therefore I am not to Blame.*—— Now, it is plain in this Case, how weak the Man's Plea is; and even common Sense will teach all Mankind to judge him the more vile and blameworthy, by how much the more his Grudge is settled and rooted. And yet the more settled and rooted it is, the more *unable* is he to get rid of it.——And just so it is here. Suppose a Creature loved God with all his Heart, but after a while begins to feel his Love abate, and an Aversion to God secretly creeping into his Soul; now perhaps he might easily suppress and overcome it. But if he gives Way to it, until he loses all Sense of God's Glory, and settles into a State of Enmity against him, it may be quite impossible ever to recover himself. And yet he is not the less, but the more vile, and so the more blame-worthy.—— If then we are so averse to God, that we *cannot* love him; and if our bad Temper is so strong, so settled and rooted, that we *cannot* get rid of it; this is so far from being Matter of Excuse for us, that it renders us so much the more vile, guilty and Hell-deserving. For to suppose that our Inability in this Case extenuates our Fault, our Inability which increases in Proportion to our Badness, is to suppose that the worse any Sinner grows, the less to Blame he is. Than which, nothing can be more absurd.

Obj. *But I was brought into this State by* Adam's *Fall.*

Ans. Let it be by *Adam*'s Fall, or how it will; yet if you are an Enemy to the infinitely glorious God your Maker, and that voluntarily; you are infinitely to Blame, and without Excuse. For nothing can make it right for a Creature to be a voluntary Enemy to his glorious Creator, or possibly excuse such a Crime. It is in its own Nature infinitely Wrong; there is nothing therefore to be said; you stand guilty before God.— It is in vain to make this, or any other Pleas, so long as we are, what we are not by Compulsion, but voluntarily. And it is in vain to pretend that we are not voluntary in our Corruptions, when they are nothing else, but the free, spontaneous Inclinations of our own Hearts. Since this is the Case, *every Mouth will be stopped, and all the World become guilty before God,* sooner or later.——

Thus

Thus we see, that as to a *natural Capacity* all Mankind are *capable* of a perfect Conformity to God's Law, which requires us only to love God with all our Hearts; and that all our Inability arises meerly from the bad Temper of our Hearts, and our want of a good Disposition; and that therefore we are wholly to blame and altogether inexcusable. Our Impotency, in one Word, is not *natural*, but *moral*, and therefore instead of *extenuating*, does *magnify* and *inhance* our Fault. The *more unable* to love God we are, the *more be we to Blame*. Even as it was with the *Jews*, the greater Contrariety there was in their Hearts, to their Prophets, to Christ and his Apostles, the more vile and blameworthy were they. * And in this Light do the Scriptures constantly view the Case. There is not one Tittle in the Old Testament or in the New, in the Law or in the Gospel, that gives the least Intimation of any Deficiency in our natural Faculties. The Law requires no more than ALL our Hearts, and never blames us for not having larger natural Capacities. The Gospel aims to recover us to love God ONLY with ALL our Hearts, but makes no Provision for our having any new natural Capacity. As to our natural

* Obj. But says a secure Sinner, *Surely there is no Contrariety in my Heart to God, I never hated God in my Life, I always loved him.*

Ans. The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* verily thought that they loved God, and that if they had lived in the Days of their Fathers, they would not have put the *Prophets* to Death. They were altogether insensible of the perfect Contrariety of their Hearts to the divine Nature. And whence was it? Why, they had wrong Notions of the divine Being, and they loved that false Image which they had framed in their own Fancies. And so they had wrong Notions of the Prophets which their Fathers hated and murdered, and hence imagined that they should have loved them. But they saw a little what a Temper and Disposition Christ was of, and him they hated with a perfect Hatred. So there are Multitudes of secure Sinners and self-deceived Hypocrites, who verily think they love God, nevertheless as soon as ever they open their Eyes in Eternity, and see just what God is, their Love will vanish, and their Enmity break out and exert it self to Perfection. So that the Reason Sinners see not their Contrariety to the divine Nature, is their not seeing what God is. —— It must be so. For a sinful Nature and an holy Nature are diametrically opposite. So much as there is of a sinful Disposition in the Heart, so much of Contrariety is there to the divine Nature. If therefore we are not sensible of this Contrariety, it can be owing to nothing but our Ignorance of God, or not believing him to be what he really is. *Rom.* 7. 8, 9.

natural Capacities, all is well. It is in our Temper, in the Frame and Disposition of our Hearts, that the *Seat* of all our Sinfulness lies. Ezek. 12. 2. *Son of Man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious House, which have Eyes to see, and see not, they have Ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a REBELLIOUS House.* This is the *Bottom* of the Business. We have Eyes to see, and Ears to hear, and his Glory shines all around us, in the Heavens and in the Earth, in his Word and in his Ways; and his Name is proclaimed in our Ears; and there is nothing hinders our seeing and hearing, but that we are *rebellious* Creatures. Our Contrariety to God makes us blind to the Beauty of the divine Nature, and deaf to all his Commands, Counsels, Calls and Invitations. We might know God, if we had a Heart to know him; and love God, if we had a Heart to love him. It is nothing but our bad Temper and being destitute of a right Disposition. that makes us spiritually blind and spiritually dead. If this Heart of *Stone* was but away, and a Heart of *Flesh* was but in us, all would be well. We should be able enough to see and hear and understand and know divine Things; and should be ravished with their Beauty; and it would be most natural and easy to love God with all our Hearts.

And hence it is most evident, that the supreme Governour of the World has not the least Ground or Reason to abate his Law, or to reverse the Threatning; nor have a rebellious World the least Ground or Reason to charge God with Cruelty, and say, "It is not *just*, that he should *require* "*more than we can do*, and threaten to damn us for not "doing." For, from what has been said, it is manifest that the *Law is holy, just and good.* And that there is nothing in the Way of our perfect Conformity to it, but our own Wickedness, in which we are free and hearty and voluntary; and for which, therefore, in strict Justice, we deserve eternal Damnation. The Law is already exactly upon a Level with our natural Capacities, and it need not therefore be brought any lower. And there is no greater Punishment threatened than our Sin deserves, there is therefore no Reason the Threatning should be reversed. As to the Law, all is well, and there is no need of any Alteration.

And

And there is nothing amiss, but in our selves. It is impudent Wickedness therefore to fly in the Face of God and of his holy Law, and charge him with Injustice & Cruelty; because, forsooth, we hate him so bad, that we cannot find it in our Hearts to love him; and are so high-hearted and stout, that we must not be blamed. No, we are too good to be blamed in the Case, and all the Blame therefore must be cast upon God and his holy Law.— Yea, we are come to that, in this rebellious World, that if God sends to us the News of Pardon and Peace thro' Jesus Christ, and invites us to return unto him and be reconciled, we are come to that, I say, as to take it as an high Affront at the Hands of the Almighty. " He pretends to offer us Mercy," (say God-hating, God-provoking Sinners,) " but he only mocks " us. For he offers all upon Conditions, which we can- " not possibly perform."— This is as if they should say, " We hate him so much, and are of so high a Spirit, that " we cannot find in our Hearts to return, and own the " Law to be just, by which we stand condemned, and look " to his free Mercy thro' Jesus Christ for Pardon and eter- " nal Life; and therefore if he will offer Pardon and eter- " nal Life upon no easier Terms, he does but dissemble " with us, and mock and deride us in our Misery."—— And since this is the true State of the Case, therefore it is no wonder, that even infinite Goodness it self, has fixed upon a Day, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And then shall ungodly Sinners be convinced of all their hard Speeches, which they have ungodlily spoken against the Lord. And then shall the Righteousness of all God's Ways be made manifest before all the World.

To conclude, God, the great Lord of all, has threatned eternal Damnation against all those, who do not perfectly keep the Law; (*Gal.* 3. 10.) even altho' they live and die in the midst of the Heathen World. *Rom.* 1. 18, 19, 20. (of which more afterwards.) And at the Day of Judgment he will execute the Threatning upon all, (those only excepted, that are by Faith interested in Christ and in the New-

New-Covenant:) and his so doing will evidently be justifiable in the Sight of all Worlds on this Ground, viz. That they were not under a *natural Necessity* of Sinning, but were altogether *voluntary* in their Disobedience. *Luk.* 19. 27. *But those mine ENEMIES which WOULD NOT that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.*

And *this*, by the Way, is the very Thing, which stops the Mouth of an awakened, convinced, humbled Sinner, and settles him down in it, that he deserves to be damned, notwithstanding all his *Doings*; viz. that he is what he is, not by *Compulsion*, or thro' a *natural Necessity*, but altogether *voluntarily*.— There is nothing more difficult in the whole Work preparatory to Conversion, than to make the Sinner see and feel and own, that it is just, quite just, altogether just and fair, for God to damn him.—— He pleads, *that he is sorry for all his Sins, and is willing to forsake them all for ever, and is resolved always to do as well as he can.* He pleads, *that he can't help his Heart's being so bad, that he did not bring himself into that Condition, but that he was brought into it by the Fall of* Adam, *which he could not possibly prevent, and which he had no Hand in.*—— But when he comes in a clear and realizing Manner to see and feel the *whole Truth*; viz. That he does not care for God, nor desire to, but is really an Enemy to him in his *very Heart*, and *voluntarily* so, and that all his fair Pretences, and Promises, Prayers, and Tears are but meer Hypocrisy, arising only from Self-love, and guilty Fears, and mercenary Hopes,— NOW the Business is done.—— For says he, *It matters not how I came into this Condition, nor whether I can help having so bad a Heart, since I am* voluntarily *just such a one as I am, and really* love *and* choose *to be what I be.* Rom. 7. 8, 9. *Sin revived and I died.* He feels himself without Excuse, and that his Mouth is stopped, and that he must be forced to own the Sentence just: for he feels that it is not owing to any *Compulsion* or *natural Necessity*, but that he is *voluntarily* and *heartily* such a one as he is. And *now*, and not till *now*, does he feel himself to be a Sinner, *compleatly* so; for he, all along before, fancied some Goodness to be in him, and thought himself in some Measure excusable. And *now*, and not till *now*, is he prepared to attribute his

Salvation

Salvation *entirely* to free and sovereign Grace. All along before he had something *to say for himself*, like the *Pharisee*. But with the *Publican*, he *now* sees that he lies at *Mercy*. *Luk.* 18. 13.——*This* is the very Thing that makes all Mankind to blame, altogether to blame, for being what they be, namely, that they are *voluntarily* so; *this* is the Reason they deserve to be damned for being so, and *this* when seen and felt by the awakened Sinner effectually stops his Mouth.

And *this* also is the very Thing that makes Believers see themselves *wholly to blame* for not being perfectly holy, and lays a Foundation for their *mourning* for their *want* of a *perfect* Conformity to the Law. They feel their Defects are not the Result of a *natural Necessity*, but only of the Remains of their old Aversion to God, which, so far as they are unsanctified, they are *voluntary* in. * And hence they cry

* Obj. " But does not St. *Paul* say in Rom. 7. 18. *To will, is present* " *with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not?*"

Ans. 'Tis true, he had a strong Disposition to be perfectly holy, but his Disposition was not perfect. He had a strong Disposition to love God supremely, live to him entirely, and delight in him wholly, but his whole Heart was not perfectly disposed to do so. There was a Spirit of aversion to God and love to Sin remaining in him. *In me, that is, in my Flesh, dwells no good Thing.* And this was the Ground and Cause of all his Impotency. So that when he says, *To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not*, he means, " To be in a Measure disposed to love God supremely, live " to him entirely and delight in him wholly, is natural and easy: but " how to get my whole Heart into the Disposition I find not, it is " beyond me, thro' the Remains of the Flesh, i. e. of my native " Contrariety to God and love to Sin." Which remaining Contrariety to God, and Propensity to Sin, so far as he was unsanctified, he was *voluntary* in; but so far as he was sanctified, he perfectly hated. *With my Mind, I my self serve the Law of God, but with my Flesh the Law of Sin. ver.* 25. And so *the Spirit lusted against the Flesh, and the Flesh against the Spirit*; and these two were *contrary the one to the other*; and hence he *could not do the Things that he would.* Gal. 5. 17.

Obj. " But does not St. *Paul* speak several Times in *Rom.* 7. as if he " was not *properly to blame* for his remaining Corruptions, when he " says, *It is not I, but Sin that dwelleth in me!*"

Ans. He only means, by that Phrase, to let us know that his remaining Corruption was not the *governing Principle* in him: according to what he had said in *Rom.* 6. 14. *Sin shall not have the Dominion over*

you,

cry out, *I am carnal, sold under Sin, O wretched Man that I am!* Rom. 7. 14, 24. And set themselves down for *Beasts* and *Fools*. *Psal*. 73. 22.

And finally, this want of a good Temper, and voluntary and stubborn Aversion to God, and love to themselves, the World and Sin, is ALL that renders the immediate Influences of the holy Spirit, so absolutely necessary, or indeed at all needful, to recover and bring them to love God with all their Hearts. A bare Representation of what God is, were Men of a right Temper, would ravish their Hearts; for his Beauty and Glory is infinite. 'Tis nothing therefore but their Badness that makes it needful that there should be *Line upon Line, and Precept upon Precept*. 'Tis their Aversion to God, that makes any *Perswasions* at all needful; for were they of a right Temper, they would love God with all their Hearts *of their own Accord*. And surely were not Men very bad indeed, there would be no Occasion for his Ambassadors with *such Earnestness* to beseech them. *We pray you*, says the Apostle, *in Christ's Stead, be ye reconciled to God*. 2 Cor. 5. 20. But now, that all external Means that can *possibly* be used, all Arguments and Motives and Entreaties, urged in the *most forceable Manner*, should not be able to recover Men to God, no not *one*, in *all* the World, without the immediate Influences of the holy Spirit, can surely be attributed to nothing short of this, that an apostate World are in very Deed at Enmity against God, and their Contrariety to him is mightily settled and rooted in their Hearts: *mightily* settled and rooted *indeed*, that *Paul* was nothing, and *Apollos* nothing, and all their most vigorous Efforts nothing; so that without the immediate Influences of the holy Spirit, not one, by them, altho' the best Preachers, of mere Men, that ever lived, could be perswaded to turn to God. 1 *Cor*. 3. 7.

But

you, for ye are not under the Law but under Grace: But does not at all design to insinuate that he did not see himself to blame, yea wholly to blame, for his remaining Corruption.—— For tho' he says sometimes, *It is not I, but Sin that dwelleth in me*, yet at other Times, *I am carnal, sold under Sin, ver*. 14. *O wretched Man that I am*, ver. 24. Like a broken-hearted Penitent. But he could not have *mourned* for his remaining Corruption as being *sinful*, if he had not felt himself to *Blame* for it.

But that the World, should in Fact, rise in Arms, and put the Messengers of Heaven to Death, seems to argue *Enmity* and *Malice*, even to *Perfection*.— It is Men's *Badness*, that keeps them from taking in right Apprehensions of God, and that makes them blind to the Beauty of the divine Nature, and that makes them hate God, instead of loving of him; but for *this*, they would love God of *their own Accord*, without any more ado. *If God were your Father*, (says Christ) *ye would love me*; *ye are of your Father the Devil*, therefore ye hate me. Surely then all the World are inexcusable and wholly to blame for their continuance in Sin, and justly deserve eternal Damnation at the Hands of God, as was before said. Nor is it any Excuse, to say, "God does not give me sufficient Grace to make me "better;" whenas I might love God, with all my Heart, of my own Accord, with all the Ease in the World, if I were but of a right Temper. Yea, such is his Glory and Beauty, that I could not but be ravished with it, were I such as I ought to be; and my needing any special Grace to make me love God, argues that I am an Enemy to him, a vile abominable Wretch, not fit to live. And to pretend to excuse my self, and say, "I can't, and God won't make "me," is just as bad as if a rebellious Child should go to his good Father, and say, "I hate you, and can't love you, "and God won't by his almighty Power make me better; "and therefore I be not to Blame." Whenas the Wretch could not but love his good Father, were it not that he is so exceedingly vitiated in his Temper.—— If our Impotency consisted in and resulted from our want of natural Capacities, if it was the Business of the holy Spirit to give us new natural Faculties, then we might plead our Inability, and plead God's not giving of us sufficient Power, in Excuse for our selves. But since all our Impotency takes it's Rise entirely from another Quarter, and all our need of the Influences of the holy Spirit to bring us to love God results from our Badness, therefore are we without Excuse, altho' God leaves us entirely to our selves.——And indeed nothing can be more absurd, than to suppose the Governour of the World *obliged* to make his Creatures love him, *in spight of all their Aversion*; or more wicked, than to lay

the *Blame*, of their not loving of him, *upon him*, in Case he does not. *Jer.* 7. 8, 9, 10,———16.

Obj. *But if it be granted, that Men's natural Powers are adequate with the Law of God, and so they, as to their natural Capacities, are capable of a perfect Conformity to the Law; and if it be granted, that the outward Advantages, which all have who live under the Gospel, are sufficient, were Men but of a right Temper, to lead them to the true Knowledge of God; and so, that all such are without Excuse: yet if any Part of Mankind do not enjoy sufficient outward Advantages for the true Knowledge of God, without which it is impossible they should either love or serve him, how can such justly and fairly be accounted altogether to blame and wholly inexcusable? If the* Heathen, *who have no other outward Advantages whereby to gain the true Knowledge of God, than the Works of Creation and Providence, do but honestly improve what they have, shall not they be accepted, altho' they fall short of sinless Perfection? or is it right and fair, that they should be damned?*

Ans. I suppose, that those Advantages, which all Mankind do actually enjoy, would be sufficient to lead them to a true Knowledge of God, and so to love and serve him, were they of a right Disposition, and were it not for the Prejudices that blind and darken their Minds, which arise from their Enmity to God, and Love to themselves, the World and Sin. *Rom.* 1. 20, 28.—— And I suppose, that God, the wise, and holy, just and good Governour of the World, is under no natural Obligation, to use any supernatural Means, for the removal of those Prejudices; (*Rom.* 9. 15.) especially considering that Men love them, and are obstinate in them, and will not let them be removed if they can help it, as is in Fact the Case. *Rom.* 1. 18, 28. *Joh.* 3. 19.—— And I suppose, that since the Law is holy, just and good, that nothing short of sinless Perfection *can*, or *ought* to, pass with the supreme Lawgiver and Judge of the World, as a Condition of Acceptance. *Gal.* 3. 10. *Rom.* 3. 20.—— And I suppose, that God was under no Obligations to provide a Saviour to bear the Curse of the Law and answer its Demands for *any*, since *all* are voluntarily at Enmity against him and his Law. *Rom.* 5. 8.— Upon the whole, I suppose, that all Mankind might have been

been left in their fallen State, without a Saviour, or any offers of Pardon and Peace, or any supernatural Advantages whatsoever; and that yet their natural Obligations to love God with all their Hearts, would have by no Means ceased; and that it would have been perfectly just and right with God, to have inflicted eternal Damnation upon us, for our not doing so. *Rom.* 1 18. & 3. 19.—— And besides, I suppose, that all the Nations of the Earth might have had the Gospel preached to them, and to this Day enjoyed it, had not the World been in Arms against it, and killed the Messengers of Peace, who were sent to carry the glad Tidings of Pardon and Salvation round the World. *Mat.* 28. 19. And I suppose, that still in every Age of the Christian Church, there have been Ministers of Christ, who would gladly go to the farthest Parts of the Earth, to carry the joyful News of a Saviour, were Men but willing to receive the News, and repent and convert and return to God: I know, there are such in this Age. From all which, I suppose that it is right, fair and just for God to execute the Threatning of his Law according to his declared Design. *Rom.* 2. 5, 6.—— Thus much in general. But to be more particular:

1. It is plain, that the Heathen, as well as the rest of Mankind, are under a Law that forbids all Sin and requires perfect Holiness. *For the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men*, let them be *Jews* or *Gentiles*. Rom. 1. 18. And since God is what he is, and they his Creatures, there is the same general Ground and Reason that they should love him with all their Hearts, as that others should. And it is plain, St. *Paul* looked upon the Heathen under Obligations *to glorify God as God, and be thankful*, Rom. 1. 21. Which is the Sum of what is required in the first Table of the Law. And none will pretend that the Heathen are not obliged to love their Neighbours as themselves, and do as they would be done by: Which is the Sum of what the second Table requires. So that it is a plain Case, that they are, by the Law of Nature, obliged to the same perfect Holiness, which is required, in God's written World, of the rest of Mankind.

2. It is plain, St. *Paul* looked upon them as enjoying sufficient Means of Knowledge, and so to be without Excuse. *Rom.* 1. 18. *For the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness.* "Who hold the "Truth in Unrighteousness, i. e. who, instead of heartily "receiving and loving and conforming to the Truth, do "from Love to their Lusts, hate, and wickedly suppress, "all right Notions of God, of Truth and Duty, stifling "their Consciences."— But how do the Gentiles discover this Aversion to the Truth, who are under no Advantages to know it ?— "I answer," says the Apostle, "their Ad-"vantages are sufficient. For (*v.* 19.) *That which may be* "*known of God is manifest in them.* i. e. The Perfections of "God, which is all that is knowable of God, are discovered to "them:" as he adds, "*For God hath shewed it unto them.*"— But were not the Perfections of God discovered to them so darkly, as not to be sufficiently evident and perceivable ?— "Surely no," says he; "for (*v.* 20.) *The invisible Things* "*of him, from the Creation of the World, are CLEARLY* "*SEEN, being understood by the Things that are made, even* "*his eternal Power and Godhead*; *so that they are without* "*Excuse.* i. e. Ever since the Creation of the World, the "Perfections of God are clearly to be seen in his Works, "the Things which he has made manifesting plainly what "a God he is; so that those, who see not his Perfections "and are not sensible of his infinite Glory, can't plead their "want of sufficient outward Advantages, in Excuse for "their Ignorance and Insensibility, and therefore the Hea-"then, who have this Advantage, are without Excuse." *—

And

* If it should be *objected*, that St. *Paul* only means, that their Advantages were so great, as to render them inexcusable in their *gross Idolatry* and *high-handed Wickedness*; because they did, or might have known better than to do so.——— It may be easily *answered* from the 18th *Verse*, that he means to prove that they were altogether inexcusable, not only in their *gross Sins*, but also in *all* their *Ungodliness*, and *Unrighteousness*. i. e. plainly in *all* their want of a perfect Conformity to the moral Law, or Law of Nature. For the least Degree of Non-conformity in Heart or Life to the first Table of the Law, is so great a Degree of *Ungodliness*, and the very least Degree of Non-conformity

And still farther to clear up the Point, the Apostle seems to go on, as it were, to say,— " Yea, it is evident that " the present Ignorance of the Gentile Nations is affected, " and so inexcusable, not only from the sufficiency of their " present outward Advantages, but also from their *former* " Misimprovement of the Advantages which they *hereto-* " *fore* did enjoy. *Because* (℣. 21.) *when they knew God*, " i. e. when the Heathen Nations *formerly* had right " Notions of God instilled into them, being instructed in " the Knowledge of the true God, by *Noah* and his Sons, " from whom they descended, yet then *they glorified him* " *not as God, neither were thankful*; their Instructions had " no Influence upon them to make them holy. *But* they " *became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart* " *was darkened.* i. e. They soon fell off to Idolatry, and " lost that Knowledge of the true God, in which they had " been instructed and educated. *For* (℣. 28.) *They did not* " *like to retain God in their Knowledge.* i. e. to remember " those Instructions, which had been given them, concern- " ing the Nature and Perfections of God: † But they

 abandoned

formity to the second Table of the Law, is so great a Degree of *Unrighteousness*. And St. *Paul* is express in it, that the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against *ALL Ungodliness*, &c. And in *ver.* 21. he is full in it that the Heathen are wholly inexcusable for *not glorifying God as God*, which is manifestly *all* that the Law ever required.— So that it is plain, he does not design, merely to prove that they were inexcusable in their *Idolatry* and the *gross Wickedness* of their Lives; but also that they were inexcusable in, and wholly to Blame for, *their not being perfectly holy*. For they did, or might have known, that *God deserved to be loved with all their Heart*; and *their Neighbour, as themselves*.

† And I may add——— *Concerning the Seed of the Woman, the promised Messiah, and the Way of Salvation thro' him.*——— For, no doubt, *Noah* and his Sons had heard of this Promise, and told it to their Posterity; and if they had handed it down safe, from Age to Age, the Heathen World might, throughout all Generations, have been in a salvable State; for this Promise contained the Sum and Substance of the Gospel. *Methuselah* lived *two Hundred and forty* Years in the Days of *Adam*. *Noah* lived *six Hundred*, and his Sons about a *Hundred* Years in the Days of *Methuselah*. And *Isaac* was *fifty* Years old before all *Noah's* Sons were dead. So that this Promise might easily have been handed a long down by Tradition, and doubtless would have been so, had it been precious in the Eyes of the Children of Men. And afterwards, farther Light might have been obtained from *Israel*, God's peculiar People, by the Gentile Nations, had they really been desirous of it.

" abandoned themſelves to Idolatry. (*v.* 23, 25.) *For which* " *Cauſe*, (*v.* 24, 26.) for which Contempt caſt on God, " *God gave them up* to all Manner of Wickedneſs. So that " the preſent extreme Ignorance, Blindneſs and Wicked- " neſs of the Gentile Nations, they have, thro' their Aver- " ſion to God and Love to Sin, brought themſelves into. " So that it is manifeſt, they do not deſire the Know- " ledge of God, but evidently hate all right Notions of " him; and ſo are, beyond diſpute, *without Excuſe*. Which " was the Point to be proved." Thus he proves that they are without Excuſe, becauſe their preſent Advantages for the Knowledge of God are ſufficient; which Advantages ever ſince the Creation of the World have been common to all: and becauſe they had once ſuperadded Advantages from parental Inſtructions, which, inſtead of well improving, and of carefully handing down from Generation to Generation, they hated to remember, and ſo ſoon forgot.

And theſe *Paſſages* ought to be of more Weight to decide the Caſe, becauſe they are not meerly occaſional Strokes, but the Apoſtle is evidently upon the very ſame Point that I am. For from the 18th. *Verſe* of this *firſt Chapter*, to the 19th. *Verſe* of the *third*, He is induſtriouſly labouring to prove, *that both Jews and Gentiles are all under Sin*, and ſo *the whole World guilty before God*. And his Arguments are not fetched from *Adam's firſt Sin*, but from comparing them with the Law of God, whereby he diſcovers their Wickedneſs; all the Blame whereof, he entirely lays upon them: and becauſe it might have been *objected*, *that the Heathen World had not ſufficient Means of Knowledge, and ſo were not wholly to blame and inexcuſable in their Non-conformity to the Law*, He does here deſignedly obviate the *Objection*, and prove and declare them to be *without any Excuſe from that Quarter*. The Apoſtle evidently takes it for granted, that they had ſufficient natural Powers to capacitate them for the Knowledge of God, and he proves that their outward Advantages were ſufficient, and ſo he lays the whole Blame of their Ignorance, Blindneſs and Wickedneſs upon themſelves; and finally ſums them up, with the reſt of Mankind, as having their *Mouths ſtopped*, and *ſtanding guilty before God. Chapter*, 3. 19.

The

The Truth of the Case seems, in a few Words, to lie here; that if *Adam* had never fell, the Works of Creation and Providence had been the Glass in which he himself, and all his Posterity, would have beheld the Glory of the Lord, from Age to Age; whereby, *being naturally of a right Temper*, they would have been effectually influenced, to love him, live to him, delight in him, and praise him for ever; or in St. *Paul's* Words, *To glorify God as God, and be thankful.*—— And I suppose, that all Mankind, still having the same natural Powers, and the same outward Advantages, are therefore intirely to Blame for, and wholly inexcusable in, all their Ignorance, Blindness, and Wickedness; especially considering they perfectly love to be what they be, and hate to be reclaimed, and stand ready to resist the Light when offered, and shut their Eyes against the Truth, from whatever Quarter it comes.— *The Heavens*, still as clearly as ever, do *declare the Glory of the Lord, and the Firmament sheweth his handy work*; *Day unto Day uttereth Speech, and Night unto Night sheweth Knowledge.* Psal. 19. 1. The *natural Perfections* of God are clearly to be seen in all his Works at the first Glance, and his *moral Perfections* would be equally evident, to an intelligent Creature of a right Temper, at the second Thought. And then his Glory would immediately shine brighter than the Sun, and every Heart be ravished with his infinite Beauty. But such is our Alienation from the Deity in this apostate World, and such the vitiated Temper of our Minds, that while Angels see the divine Glory in all his Works (*Rev.* 4. 11.) Men, sottish, brutish Men, tho' they have Eyes to see, see not; but are blind to the Manifestations which God makes of himself; *because they do not like to have God in their Knowledge.*

And now,

3. *As to the Heathens being accepted, for honestly improving their Powers and Advantages*; it is, *in the first Place*, most certain from St. *Paul's* Account, that they were at the very greatest Distance from doing so.—But *secondly*, if they had done so, yea, if they had discovered so good a Temper of Mind, as perfectly to have conformed to the divine Law, yet it is the very Scope of all the Apostle's Reasoning, in

the three first Chapters of his Epistle to the *Romans*, to prove that *by the Deeds of the Law no Flesh*, neither *Jew* nor *Gentile*, *can be justified*. And since the Law is holy, just and good, it is not indeed *reasonable*, that any Thing short of sinless Perfection, *from first to last*, should pass with the righteous Governour of the World, as a Condition of Acceptance. Future Obedience, let it be ever so perfect, can do nothing to make Amends for former Neglects: As has been already proved in another Place.——But that which of it self alone is entirely sufficient to say in this Matter, is, that it is expresly declared in *Rom.* 1. 18. *The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness* (or every Breach of the first Table,) *and Unrighteousness* (or every Breach of the second Table of the Law,) *of Men who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness*. Which Words are evidently designed, by the Apostle, to represent the *Character* and *State* of the Heathen World. For he spends the rest of the *Chapter* in enlarging upon this Head, shewing how the Heathen held the Truth in Unrighteousness, and were exposed to the Wrath of God for their *Ungodliness* and *Unrighteousness*; and he concludes them all *under Sin* and *guilty*, and lost for ever, unless they obtain Justification *by Faith in Christ*. See *Chapter*, 3. 9, 19, 20, 30. *Verses*.—— And thus we see how all Mankind have, not only sufficient natural Powers, but also sufficient outward Advantages, to know God and perfectly conform to his Law, even the Heathen themselves. And that the very Reason they do not, is their want of such a Temper as they ought to have, and their voluntary rooted Enmity to God, and love to Sin. *

And

* Obj. *But it is impossible they should love God with all their Hearts, if they have no Hopes of finding Favour in his Sight.* For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him. *Heb.* 11. 6.

Answ. *Coming to God*, in *Heb.* 11. 6. evidently implies, not only a Conformity to the Law, but also a Compliance with the Gospel. i.e. it implies not only a Disposition to love God with all our Hearts, but also a trusting in him for the divine Favour and eternal Life upon Gospel Encouragements; which Gospel-Encouragements must therefore be understood and believed, or it will indeed be impossible so to trust in him. But I did not say that the *Heathen* were under sufficient outward Advantages for an evangelical returning to God, which

And now that they are wholly to blame and entirely inexcusable, appears still in a clearer Light.

But before I leave this Point, I must make this *Remark*, viz. That if God looks upon the Advantages of the Heathen sufficient, no Wonder that he so often speaks of the Advantages of his own professing People, as being much more than barely sufficient; even altho' they enjoy only the outward Means of Grace, without the inward Influences of the Holy Spirit. For if the *natural* Advantages of the Heathen are sufficient, surely the *supernatural* Advantages of those who enjoy a *divine Revelation*, are much more than sufficient. And if the Advantages of those who enjoy *only* a divine Revelation are much more than sufficient, no wonder then that those who lived in the Days of *Moses*, *Isaiah* and *Christ*, are represented as very Monsters of Wickedness, for remaining blind, senseless, impenitent, and unholy, since they enjoyed such *great*, and so *many superadded* Advantages. No wonder therefore, that *Moses* every where represents the Children of *Israel*, as such a stubborn, perverse, stiffnecked, rebellious People, (particularly see *Deut.* 9.) and makes as if their Blindness, Senselessness and Impenitency was the most unaccountable

which is what is intended in *Heb.* 11. 6. but only for a Compliance with the Law of Nature, which is what is intended in *Rom.* 1. 20, 21.

OBJ. *But still, is it not, in the Nature of Things, impossible they should love God, if they have no Hopes of finding Favour in his Sight?*

ANSW. Let common Sense decide the Case. A Servant hates his Master (a very good Man) without Cause, murders his only Son, steals a thousand Pounds of his Money, runs away into a far Country, spends several Years in riotous Living; at length he is catch'd, he is brought Home to his Master, who is a Man in Authority, before him he has his Trial, is condemned, and has no hope of Favour.---- But how does this render it impossible, *in the Nature of Things*, that he should love his Master? Why can't he love his Master now, as well as ever he could? He has the same original Grounds of Love he used to have. He used to love his Master: his Master is as worthy of his Esteem as ever: He has no Cause to esteem his Master e'r the less, because he himself has been such a Villain, or because he is doom'd to die for his Crimes; a Punishment justly due. To dislike his Master for these Things, would be perfectly unreasonable. Surely, were he but of a right Temper, he could not but take all the Blame to himself, and justify his Master, and esteem and love him, and be heartily sorry for all his Villianies. He can be under no Inability, but what must arise from a bad Heart. The Application is easy.

unaccountable and inexcusable, since their Eyes had seen, and their Ears had heard, such Things, and their Advantatages had been so great. Deut. 29. 2, 3, 4. *And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your Eyes, in the Land of* Egypt, *unto* Pharaoh, *and unto all his Servants, and unto all his Land*; (and that he might set forth the Greatness of the Things which they had seen, he adds) *The great Temptations which thine Eyes have seen, the Signs, and those great Miracles*, (all which have been enough to melt the Heart of a Stone, and) *yet* (as he goes on to say,) *the Lord* (by all these Things which have been so much more than enough,) *hath not given you an Heart to perceive, and Eyes to see, and Ears to hear, unto this Day*: All these Means have not to this Day attained the End, and made you see and feel and know what a God the Lord is, and bring you to love him and fear him and walk in all his Ways. *Moses* evidently speaks of it as a very *strange* Thing, that they should be blind, senseless, impenitent and unholy, after such Means and Advantages, as if they were most inexcusable, yea, under a very aggravated Guilt; whereby he plainly takes it for granted, that their Advantages had been *much more* than sufficient, had it not been for their Want of a right Temper, and their wicked Obstinacy and Perverseness. And yet he mentions none but *outward* Means and *outward* Advantages, and does not give the least Intimation that they had had any *inward* Assistance from the holy Spirit. He does not bring any such Thing into the Account, but wholly aggravates their Sin and their great Inexcusableness, from the Consideration of their *outward* Helps. *Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your Eyes in the Land of Egypt*, &c.— And no wonder he tho't them so *very* inexcusable, since God looks upon the Heathen World without Excuse, in that while *the Heavens declare the Glory of the Lord*, &c. they don't see with their Eyes, and perceive with their Hearts, and from a Sense of his Glory, only thus discovered, love him, and live to him. For if their Advantages are enough, surely the Advantages of the *Israelites* were much, *very much*, more than enough.

And upon the same Hypothesis, it is no Wonder that God looked upon the Case of the Children of *Israel* as he did

did, in the Time of *Isaiah*; who, from the Days of *Moses* even to that Day, had from Age to Age enjoyed such outward Advantages as they had, and had had such outward Means used with them; and in that Age enjoyed so great an outward Priviledge, as the daily Prophesying and Preaching of *Isaiah*, *Hosea*, *Amos*, and *Micah*; who, some, if not all, of them prophesied, as it is very probable, *forty* or *fifty* Years together at the same Time, as we may learn from the first Verse in their several Books, which tell us when and how long they prophesied, compared with the Account we have of those Kings Reigns, in the Books of the *Kings*, in whose Reigns they prophesied.—— No wonder, I say, God speaks as he does in Isa. 5. 1,—7. *My Beloved hath a Vineyard in a very fruitful Hill. And he fenced it, and gathered out the Stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest Vine, and built a Tower in the midst of it, and also made a Wine-Press therein.* — Here is represented the natural Powers, and outward Advantages of God's People.—— *And he looked that it should bring forth Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes. And now, O Inhabitants of* Jerusalem, *and Men of* Judah, *judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my Vineyard. What could have been done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth Grapes, brought it forth wild Grapes?* —— Here all the Blame is entirely laid on themselves, and their Conduct is considered as being inexcusably, yea, unaccountably bad.—— *And now go to*; *I will tell you what I will do to my Vineyard*; *I will take away the Hedge thereof*, &c. Where nothing can be plainer than that the Children of *Israel* are represented, as enjoying sufficient Advantages for Fruitfulness, yea, Advantages much more than barely sufficient, and that their proving as they did, was unspeakably vile and God-provoking, and for which they deserved utter Ruin; and for which indeed God did afterwards, according to his declared Design, bring utter Ruin upon them. But all those Advantages were *outward*; nor is the *inward Assistance of the holy Spirit* any where brought into the Account, whenever the Greatness of their Advantages is set forth, on Purpose to shew how aggravated their Wickedness was: but this is constantly the Charge, as in 2 Chron. 36. 15,16,17.

And

And the Lord God of their Fathers sent unto them by his Messengers, rising up betimes and sending; but they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets, until the Wrath of God arose against his People, 'till there was no Remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the King of the Chaldees. Not because they did not improve the inward Assistances of the holy Spirit, but because they did not improve their outward Advantages, *did not hearken to God's Messengers.*— And in this Strain their Confessions ran, when God by his Grace had brought them to see what they had done. As in Dan. 9. 5, 6. &c. *We have sinned, and committed Iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy Precepts, and from thy Judgments: Neither have we* HEARKENED UNTO THY SERVANTS THE PROPHETS, *which spake in thy Name.* The not *hearkning to them* is mentioned as the great Aggravation: but their not improving the inward Assistance of the Spirit is not brought into the Account. See *Neh.* 9. 30.— It is evident, that the Children of Israel, considered as a Nation, had not special Grace, or the renewing sanctifying Influences of the holy Spirit, as one of their Advantages, from Jer. 31. 31,32,33. *Behold the Days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah, not according to the Covenant I made with their Fathers, in the Day I took them by the Hand, to bring them out of the Land of Egypt, (which my* (national) *Covenant they brake, altho' I was as an Husband unto them, saith the Lord.) But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel, after those Days, saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my People.* Where the renewing sanctifying Influences of the Holy Spirit, are mentioned, as a peculiar Priviledge the *Jewish* People, were not entitled unto *as a Nation*, by that *national Covenant* which God entered into with them, as such, at Mount *Sinai*. *Exod.* 19. *Deut.* 5. and which afterwards, at the End of 40 Years, was renewed at the Borders of *Canaan*. *Deut.* 29. Nor indeed were there any inward Influences of the holy Spirit, at all, promised in that national Covenant, as a common Priviledge, to be by them in common enjoyed. And if they were not entitled

titled to this Privilege as a Nation by their national Covenant, then there is no Evidence that they, as a Nation, did enjoy it. And therefore when God speaks as if he had done all for that Nation that could be done, he plainly has Respect only to *outward Means*, which were all that they as a Nation enjoy'd: And, as to them, he evidently had good Ground so to say; since he had done such great Things for them, & sent such Prophets among them, and been continually taking all Pains, from Age to Age, to make them a holy People. Even as we are ready to say concerning the People of a particular Parish, where there is a learned, godly, and so a plain, searching, powerful, enlightning, faithful Minister, such as Mr. *Shepard* was in his Day, *What more could be done for such a People, that is not done?* —— And therefore when *Stephen* charged the *Jews, that they always resisted the Holy Ghost, as their Fathers had done*, (in *Act.* 7. 51.) he means that they had always resisted the Holy Ghost, as speaking in and by their Prophets, as now they did the same Spirit that spake in and by him: as is plain from *ver.* 52. and as is also evident from *Neh.* 9. 30. And besides there is not the least Intimation, that those *Jews* to whom *Stephen* spoke, were under any of the inward Influences of the holy Spirit, but they seem rather to act like Creatures wholly left of God. And this Hint may help us to understand that Phrase in *Neh.* 9. 20. Compared with *Num.* 11. 17.—— So that from the whole, it is evident, that the Children of *Israel*, as a Nation, were in *Isaiah's* Time looked upon as enjoying *Advantages* much more than sufficient for their being a holy and fruitful People, had they been of a right Temper and not so wickedly obstinate and perverse in their bad Disposition; and yet their *Advantages* were only *outward*, and the *inward Influences of the holy Spirit* are not taken into the Account.— And well might their Advantages be thus esteemed upon the forementioned Hypothesis.—— Yea, if all Mankind are able, in respect of their natural Capacities to yield perfect Obedience, and if the Advantages of the very Heathen were sufficient, had it not been for the want of a right Temper in them and for their very bad Disposition, it is no wonder that God speaks here concerning his peculiar People, whose outward Advan-

tages

tages were exceeding great, as if he had had very raiſed Expectations of their being a holy People.—— *Wherefore when I looked it ſhould bring forth Grapes, brought it forth wild Grapes?* q.d. "I have done all as to outward Means, "that could be done, to make you a holy People. Enough, "and more than enough. And I looked and expected "that you ſhould have been ſo. And whence is it that "you be not? How unaccountable is it? And how great "is your Wickedneſs! And how great your Guilt!" For it is God's Way, in the holy Scriptures, to ſpeak to Men, after the Manner of Men, who are wont to have their Expectations of Fruitfulneſs raiſed, when they ſow or plant in a fertile Soil, well manured and cultivated. See *Mat.* 21. 33,—41.—— Juſt ſo a Maſter is wont to ſpeak to his Servant, who is ſtrong and able for Buſineſs, "I looked "that you ſhould have done ſuch a Piece of Work, where-"fore is it not done? You had Time enough and Strength "enough." And that altho' he knew in all Reaſon before Hand, that his Servant would not do it, becauſe of his lazy, unfaithful Temper. The Deſign of ſuch Speeches being to repreſent the great *Unreaſonableneſs* and *Inexcuſableneſs* of ſuch a Conduct.

And finally, upon the ſame Hypotheſis, it is no wonder that Jeſus Chriſt repreſents the People of *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida* and *Capernaum*, as enjoying Advantages ſufficient to have brought even *Tyre* and *Sidon* and *Sodom* to Repentance, which in Scripture-Account are ſome of the moſt wicked Cities in the World; and ſo conſequently more than barely ſufficient to have brought them to Repentance, who were by Profeſſion the People of God. For they had enjoyed the Miniſtry of *Chriſt* himſelf, and ſeen very many of his mighty Works. *Mat.* 11. 20—24. If the Advantages of the Heathen World are ſufficient, well might Chriſt, ſpeaking after the Manner of Men, ſeem to be ſo confident that *Tyre* and *Sidon* and *Sodom* would have repented, if they had ſeen his *mighty Works:* And well might he ſpeak as if the People of *Chorazin* &c. had enjoyed Advantages more than barely ſufficient, and lay all the Blame of their Impenitency upon them, yea, and look upon them as under an aggravated Guilt, and give them ſo heavy a Doom.— And

yet

yet nothing can be plainer, than that the Advantages which they enjoyed were only *outward*, for no other are brought into the Account as Aggravations of their Guilt. *Wo unto thee, for if the mighty Works which were done in you*, &c.—He does not in the least intimate as if they had any inward Help from the holy Spirit, but only says he has done *mighty Works* among them. Yea, in the 25th. Verse he plainly declares that they were left destitute of *special Grace*.

And thus, while with St. *Paul*, we look upon the Advantages even of the Heathen World, as sufficient to lead them to the true Knowledge of God and a perfect Conformity to his Law, but for their Want of a good Temper, and their voluntary Aversion to God and Love to Sin; we easily see whence it is, that the external Advantages of those who enjoy the Benefit of a divine Revelation, together with other outward Means of Grace, are represented, as being much more than barely sufficient; & consequently their Guilt, in remaining Impenitent & Unholy, as being doubly aggravated.

And before I leave this Point I must make one *Remark* more, namely, that if the Advantages of the Heathen World were sufficient, but for their want of a good Temper, their voluntary Aversion to God and Love to Sin, to lead them to the true Knowledge of God, and a perfect Conformity to his Law, as has been proved; then God was not under any *natural Obligations* to grant to any of Mankind any *supernatural Advantages*, but still might justly have required sinless Perfection of all, and threatned eternal Damnation for the least Defect. I say, God was under no *natural Obligations*, i. e. any Obligations arising from his Nature and Perfections: For he might, consistent with his Holiness, Justice and Goodness, have left all Mankind to themselves, without any supernatural Advantages; since their natural Advantages were sufficient, and they were obstinate in their Ignorance, Blindness and Wickedness. Most certainly God was not bound to have sent his Son, his Spirit, his Word, his Messengers, and intreat and beseech those, who perfectly hated him, and hated to hear from him, and were disposed to crucify his Son, resist his Spirit, pervert his Word, and kill his Messengers, to turn and love him and serve him; but might, even consistent with infinite Goodness it self,

have

have let them take their Courſe, and go on in the Way they were ſet in, and have damned them all at laſt.

All that the great and glorious Governour of the World requires of Mankind in the Law of Nature, is, that they love him with all their Hearts and Souls, and live as Brethren together in his World, which is infinitely reaſonable in it ſelf, and which they have ſufficient natural Powers to do. And he has ſtretched abroad the Heavens as a Curtain over their Heads, which declare the Glory of the Lord, and in the Earth and in all his Works, his Perfections are clearly to be ſeen, ſo that all are under ſufficient Advantages for the Knowledge of him; but Mankind hate God, and ſay unto the Almighty, Depart from us, for we do not deſire the Knowledge of thy Ways: And hence they ſtill remain Ignorant of God, averſe to him, and in love with Sin. And now, I ſay, it is as evident as the Sun at Noon Day, that God might fairly have damned ſuch Creatures, without uſing any more Means with them. His Law being thus upon a perfect Level with their natural Powers and natural Advantages, he was not obliged, as he was the righteous and good Governour of the World, to grant them any ſupernatural Aſſiſtance, either outward, by an external Revelation, or inward, by the internal Influences of his holy Spirit. And therefore it is, that the great Ruler of the World, has always acted Sovereignly and Arbitrarily in theſe Matters, beſtowing theſe ſupernatural Favours upon whom he pleaſes, as being obliged to none. Thus he has done as to the external Revelation. Pſal. 147. 19, 20. *He ſheweth his Word unto* Jacob, *his Statutes and his Judgments unto* Iſrael: *He hath not dealt ſo with any Nation, and as for his Judgments they have not known them.* And thus he has done as to the internal Influences of his Spirit. Mat. 11. 25, 26. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe Things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto Babes. Even ſo Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy Sight.* And thus God even to this Day, as to both outward and inward Helps, *hath Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and Compaſſion on whom he will have Compaſſion.* He *effectually* ſends the Goſpel to one Nation and not to another; and where the Goſpel is preached, he by his Spirit awakens, convinces,

convinces, humbles, converts whom he pleases, and leaves the rest.

And thus the Objection, from the Heathen's not having sufficient outward Advantages, has been answered. And from the Answer, I have taken Occasion to make these (I hope) not unprofitable Remarks; & may now return and repeat my former Assertion, with still higher Degrees of Assurance, *viz.* that Mankind are altogether to blame for, and entirely inexcusable in, their Non-conformity to the holy Law of God, and therefore justly deserve Damnation; and that even the Heathen, as well as others.

Thus have I endeavoured, to shew what is the exact Measure of Love and Obedience that God requires of the Children of Men, and that all Mankind have sufficient natural Powers and outward Advantages, and that all their Blindness, Ignorance & Wickedness are voluntary, chosen and loved. And I have been the larger upon these Things, in order to clear up the *Justice* of God and his Law, and the *Grace* of God in his Gospel: Both which, have been sadly misrepresented, by those who have not aright understood or well attended to these Things. They have said, that it is not just in God to require sinless Perfection of Mankind, or damn any for the want of it. They have said, that the Law is abated and brought down to a level with, (I hardly know what, unless I call it,) the vitiated depraved Temper of an apostate World, who both hate God and his holy Law, and want an Act of Toleration and Indulgence to be past in Favour of their Corruptions, that, at Heart, they may remain dead in Sin, and yet, by a Round of external Duties, be secured from Damnation at last. And so they have, like the *Pharisees* of old, (*Mat.* 5.) destroyed the Law by their Abatements. And now the Law, only by which is the Knowledge of Sin, being thus laid aside, they are ignorant of their sinful, guilty, helpless, undone Estate; and so are insensible of their Need of the sovereign Grace of God thro' Jesus Christ to save them, and fancy they are good-natured enough to turn to God of their own Accord. And having imbibed such Notions of Religion, they easily see that the better Sort of Heathen have for Substance the same Religion with themselves, and

therefore have equal Charity for them. Not being really sensible of their Need of Gospel-Grace for themselves, they have full Charity for the Heathen, who never so much as heard of it. But what I have said is sufficient, I think, to clear the *Justice* of God in his Law, and the *Grace* of God in the Gospel, and sweep away this Refuge of Lies, by which so many gladly quiet their Consciences, and wofully deceive their own Souls. However, of these Things we shall still have something more afterwards.

Thus we have gone thro' what was proposed, have considered what was implied in Love to God, and from what Motives we are to love him, and what Measure of Love is required. And all that has been said can't possibly be sum'd up in fewer or plainer Words than these, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, with all thy Mind, and with all thy Strength.* This is the *first and great Commandment*; in Conformity whereunto the first and great Part of Religion does consist. And the *second* which is *like* unto it, being the Foundation of the other half of (this Part of) Religion (now under Consideration,) is, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* Which is what we are, in the next Place, to proceed to a Consideration of.

Section IV.

Of Love to our Neighbour.

II. *Thou shall love thy Neighbour as thy self.*— In which Words we have, (1.) the Duty required. *Thou shalt love.* (2.) The original, natural Ground and Reason of it intimated; *Thy Neighbour.* Which *Name* given to our Fellow-Men, may lead us to consider them, *as being what they are* in themselves, and as sustaining some Kind of *Character* and *Relation*, with Regard to us. (3.) The Rule and Standard by which our Love to our Neighbour is to be regulated; *As thy self.* Here therefore we may consider, what is implied in Love to our Neighbour, from what Motives we are to love him, and by what Standard our Love is to be regulated, as to its Nature and Measure.

First,

First, Let us consider *what is implied* in that *Love to our Neighbour*, which, by the Law of God, is required of us. And in *general*, it is presupposed, or implied, that we have a right Temper of Mind, an upright, impartial, candid, benevolent Temper, even to Perfection, without the least Tincture of any Thing to the contrary. For without this we shall not, we cannot, view our Neighbours in a true Light, nor think of them, nor judge of them, nor feel towards them, exactly as we ought. A wrong Temper, a selfish, partial, uncandid, censorious, carping, bitter, stingy, proud Temper, will unavoidably give a wrong Turn to all our Thoughts of, and Feeling towards, our Neighbours: as is manifest from the Nature of the Thing, and from universal Experience. *Solomon* observes, that *as a Man thinketh, so is he.* And it is as true, that *as a Man is, so he thinketh.* For out of the Heart, the Temper and Disposition of the Man, proceed his Thoughts of, and Feelings towards, both Persons and Things; according to our Saviour, *Mat.* 12. 33, 34, 35. An upright, therefore impartial, candid, benevolent Temper, to Perfection, without the least Tincture of any Thing to the contrary, is presupposed and implied in the Love required; as being, in the Nature of Things, absolutely necessary thereto. We must have a right Temper, and under the Influence thereof, be perfectly in a Disposition, to view our Neighbours in a right Light, and think and judge of them, and be affected towards them, as we ought. i. e. *To love them as our selves.*

Particularly,

1. There is a certain *Esteem* and *Value* for our Fellow-Men, which upon sundry Accounts is their Due, that is implied in this Love. There are valuable Things in Mankind. Some have one Thing, and some another. Some have Gifts, and some have Grace. Some have five Talents, and some two, and some one. Some are worthy of a greater Esteem, and some less, considered merely as they be in themselves. And then some are by God set in a higher Station and some in a lower, sustaining various Characters and standing in various Relations. As Magistrates and Subjects, Ministers and People, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, &c. And there is a certain Esteem and

Reſpect due to every one in all Stations. Now, with a diſintereſted Impartiality, and with a perfect Candour and a hearty Good-will, ought we to view the various Excellencies of our Neighbours, and conſider their various Stations, Characters and Relations, and in our Hearts we ought to give every one their due Honour, and their proper Place; being perfectly content, for our own Parts, to be and act in our own Sphere, where God has placed us; and by our Fellow-Mortals to be conſidered, as being juſt what we are. And indeed, this, for Subſtance, is the Duty of every one in the whole Syſtem of intelligent Creatures. As for God moſt high, the Throne is his proper Place, and all his intelligent Creatures have their proper Places, both with Reſpect to God, and with Reſpect to one another, which Places every one ought to take and to acquieſce in with all their Hearts. We have an Inſtance of this Temper to a good Degree in *David*. He was ſenſible that *Saul* was the *Lord's Anointed*, and that it became him to render Honour to whom Honour is due, and Fear to whom Fear, and his Heart was tender. Hence *David's Heart ſmote him, becauſe he had cut off Saul's Skirt.* 1 Sam. 24. 5. This Temper will naturally diſpoſe us to feel and conduct *right*, towards our Superiours, Inferiours and Equals: And ſo lay a ſolid Foundation for the Performance of all relative Duties. The contrary to all this, is a proud & conceited Temper, attended with a Diſpoſition to deſpiſe Superiours, ſcorn Equals, and trample upon Inferiours: A Temper to overvalue themſelves & their Friends & Party, and to undervalue and deſpiſe all others. Such do not conſider Perſons and Things as being what they are, and think and judge and be affected and act accordingly. Nor do they conſider, or regard the different Stations in which Men are ſet by God, or the Characters they ſuſtain by divine Appointment. They are not governed by the Reaſon of Things, and a Senſe of what is right and fit; but by their own Corruptions. This was the Caſe with *Korah* and his Company, when they roſe up againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and ſaid, *Ye take too much upon you, ſeeing all the Congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them.* Num. 16. 3. Pride makes Superiors ſcornful in their Temper, and tyrannical

tyrannical in their Government; and Pride makes Inferiors envious in their Temper and ungovernable in their Lives; and it makes Equals jealous, unfriendly, contentious: In a Word, it lays a Foundation for the Neglect of all relative Duties, and for a general Discord and Confusion among Mankind.

2. We ought not only to consider, esteem and respect our fellow-Men, as being what they are, and with a perfect Impartiality give them their Due, in our very Hearts, according to what they are, and to the Stations they stand in, being perfectly content, for our own Parts, with the Place which God has allotted to us in the System, and to be and act in our own proper Sphere, and willing to be considered by others as being just what we are: but it is farther implied in the Love required, that we be *perfectly benevolent* towards them, i. e. That we consider their *Welfare* and *Happiness*, as to Body and Soul, as to Time and Eternity, as being what it really is, and are (according to the Measure of our natural Capacities) thoroughly sensible of its Value and Worth, and are disposed to be affected and act accordingly, i. e. To be tender of it, value and promote it, as being what it is; to long & labour and pray for it; and to rejoyce in their Prosperity, and be grieved for their Adversity; and all from a cordial Love, and genuine good-Will. The contrary to which, is a *selfish Spirit*; whereby we are inclined only to value, and seek, and rejoyce in, our own Welfare; and not care for our Neighbour's, any further than we are influenced by Self-love and Self-Interest. Which selfish Spirit also lays a Foundation for *Envy* at our Neighbour's Prosperity, and *hard-heartedness* in the Time of his Adversity, and inclines us to hurt his Interest, to promote our own. To love our Neighbour as our selves, makes it *natural* to do as we would be done by; but a selfish Spirit, makes it *unnatural*.—*Malevolence*, *Malice* and *Spight* makes it even *natural* to delight in our Neighbour's *Misery*. And hence it is that *Revenge* is so sweet, and *Backbiting* and *Detraction* so agreeable, in this fallen, sinful World.

3. I may add, that so far as our Fellow-Men are proper Objects of *Delight* and *Complacency*, so far ought we to

take *Delight* and *Complacency* in them. And hence it is that the godly Man feels such a peculiar Love to the Children of God, for that Image of God which he sees in them. The Saints are, in his Account, *the Excellent of the Earth, in whom is all his Delight.* Psal. 16. 3. The godly Man is of Christ's Temper, who said, *Whosoever shall do the Will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my Brother, and Sister, and Mother.* Mat. 12. 50. But wicked Men are of another *Taste*; and the Things, the Tempers and Dispositions in their Neighbours, which to them appear excellent, and upon the Account of which they delight in them, are odious in God's Sight. *Luk.* 16. 15. *For that which is highly esteemed amongst Men, is Abomination in the Sight of God.* For it is the Temper of wicked Men, not only to do wickedly themselves, but also to have Pleasure in others that do so too. *Rom.* 1. 32. Those who are vain, or unclean, or intemperate, suit each other, and take Delight in one another's Company: while at the same Time they distaste and disrelish those Things among Mankind, which are truly most worthy our Delight.—— In a Word, we ought so to esteem others, as to be heartily disposed to treat them with all that Respect which is their Due; and to have such a tender Regard for their Welfare, as to be perfectly disposed, in every Instance, and in every Respect, to do as we would be done by; and to take Notice of all their good Properties, with that entire Friendliness and perfect Candor, as may dispose us to take all that Delight and Complacency in them which is fit. In order unto all which, it is requisite, that we be perfectly free from any Tincture of Pride, Selfishness, &c. and have our Hearts full of Humility, Benevolence, Candour and Goodness.

And now,

SECONDLY. *The Motives by which we are to be influenced,* thus to love our Neighbours as our selves, are such as these.—— 1. *It is right and fit in it self.* As the Apostle exhorting Children to obey their Parents in the Lord, uses this Motive, *For this is right.* Eph. 6. 1. The Ground and Reason of God's requiring of us to love our Neighbours as our selves, is because it is in its own Nature right that we should; and this ought therefore to move and influence us

us'to do so. There is the same *general* Reason why I should love my Neighbour, as why I should love my self. Lovely Things are as worthy of being loved in him, as in me; and therefore by me ought in all Reason to be loved as much. There is the same Reason why my Neighbour should be esteemed as being what he is, and according to the Station he stands in, as that I should. To esteem my self above my Neighbour, merely because I am *my self*, without any other Reason, is unfit and wrong, at first Sight. So to admire my Children, my Friends, my Party, as if there were none such, merely because they are *mine*, is unreasonable and absurd. My very worst Enemy ought, by me, to be considered and esteemed, as being what he is, with an Impartiality perfectly disinterested, as well as my very best Friend. Good Properties are not at all the better, merely for belonging to me, or to my Friends; or the worse, for belonging to my Neighbour, or my Enemy. But it is right I should view Things as they be, and be affected towards them accordingly. Indeed, I ought to be so far from a Disposition to esteem my self above others, and to be prejudiced in my own Favour (since I am capable of a much more full and intimate Acquaintance with my own Sins and Follies than with the Sins and Follies of others,) that I ought rather to be habitually disposed to prefer others in Honour above my self. *Rom.* 12. 10. *Phil.* 2. 3.— And so as to my Neighbour's Welfare and Happiness, there is the same *general* Reason why it should be dear to me, as that my own should. His Welfare is worth as much, in it self, as mine. It is as worthy therefore, to be valued, esteemed, sought after and rejoyced in, as mine It is true, my Welfare is more immediately put under my Care by God Almighty, and so it is fit it should, by me, be more especially taken Care of. Not that it is of greater Worth, for being mine; for it is not: but only because it is more immediately put under my Care by God Almighty. The same may be said of the Welfare of my Family, &c. But still my Neighbour's Welfare is in it self as precious and dear as mine, and he is my Neighbour, he is Flesh and Blood as well as I, and wants to be happy as well as I, and is my Brother by *Adam*; we are all but one great Family,

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the Offspring of the same common Parents; we should therefore all be affected as Brethren towards one another, love as Brethren, and seek each others Welfare most tenderly and affectionately, as being sensible how dear and precious the Welfare of each other is. This is perfectly right. And so we should bear one another's Burthens, mourn with them that mourn, and rejoyce with them that rejoyce, as being tender-hearted, cordial Friends to every Body. And this from a real Sight and Sense, that such a Temper and Conduct is perfectly right and fit in the Nature of Things.—— And whereas there may be several Things in my Neighbour truly agreeable, it is evidently Right I should delight in those good Properties, according to their real Worth. It is a Duty I owe to my Neighbour the Possessor, and to God the Giver, of those good Gifts.

2. But that I should thus love my Neighbour as my self, is not only in it's own Nature right, but is also *enjoined upon me by the Law and Authority of God, the supreme Governour of the World.* So that from Love to God, and from a Sense of his Right to me, and Authority over me, I ought, out of Obedience to him, to love my Neighbour as my self, and always, and in all Respects, to do, as I would be done by. And not to do so, is not only to injure my Neighbour, but to rebel against God, my King and Governour, and so becomes an infinite Evil. Hence, it is charged upon *David*, that by his Conduct respecting *Uriah*, he had *despised the Lord*, and *despised the Commandment of the Lord*; and this is mentioned as the *great Evil* of his Sin. 2 *Sam.* 12, 9, 10. For he had not merely murdered one of his Fellow-Worms, but risen up in Rebellion against the most high God: And practically said, "I care not for God, nor his Authority, I love my Lust, and will gratify it for all him." And therefore when *David* was bro't to true Repentance, the native Language of his Soul, to God, was, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned*, Psal. 51. 4. 'Tis *Rebellion* therefore, 'tis a *despising* the Lord, 'tis an *infinite Evil*, not to love ourNeighbours as our selves.

3. We have not only the Authority, but also *the Example of God, to influence us to this great Duty of Love and Benevolence.* God is Love; he has an infinite Propensity to do Good,

Good, and that in Cases where there is no Motive from without to excite him; yea, where there is every Thing to the contrary. He loves to make his Sun rise and Rain fall upon the Evil and Unthankful. He loves to fill the Hearts of all with Food and Gladness; and to strew innumerable Blessings round a guilty, God-hating World. Yea, out of his great Goodness he has given his only Son to die for Sinners, and offers Grace and Glory and all good Things thro' him: being ready to pardon and receive to Favour any poor guilty Wretch, that will repent and return to him thro' Jesus Christ. And now for us, after all this, not to love our Fellow-Men, yea, not to love our very worst Enemies, is very vile. Since *God has so loved us, we ought* surely *to love one another.* 1 Joh. 4. 11. Since he has treated us his Enemies so kindly, we ought now as *dear Children* to imitate him, and *love our Enemies, and bless them that curse us, and do Good to them that hate us, and pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us,* Mat. 5. 44,45. The infinite Beauty in the Goodness of the divine Nature, lays us under infinite Obligations to imitate it, in the Temper of our Minds, and in our daily Conduct. And 'tis Ingratitude, 'tis a Shame, 'tis abominable Wickedness, not to love our worst Enemies, and forgive the greatest Injuries. Since the great Governour of the World has treated us Worms and Rebels as he has, one would think, that after all this, we should never be able to find a Heart to hate or injure any Mortal. Surely we are under very strong Obligations to accept that divine Exhortation, in Eph. 4. 31,32. *Let all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and evil Speaking be put away from among you, with all Malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* And (Chap. 5. ℣. 1.) *Be ye Followers of God as dear Children.*— Besides there are many *additional Obligations* to Love and Benevolence, and to peculiar Respect & Kindness between *Husband* and *Wife*, *Parents* and *Children*, *Friend* & *Friend*, &c. arising from their mutual Relations, & Dependences, & from special Kindnesses already received, or hoped for. And now,

Thirdly, *As to the Standard, by which our Love is to be regulated, viz.* Thou shalt love thy Neighbour *as thy self.*

ſelf. In order rightly to underſtand it, we muſt,—1. Place ourſelves, ſenſibly, as in the Preſence of the infinitely great and glorious God, before whom all the Nations of the Earth are nothing and leſs than nothing and vanity, and in the Light of God's Greatneſs and Glory, we muſt take a view of our own Littleneſs and Deformity, and ſo learn how we ought to be affected towards our ſelves compared with God. And as we ought to love our ſelves, ſo ought we to love our Neighbour. And now in *general*, we ought to be diſpos'd towards God, as being what he is, and towards our Selves and Neighbours, as being what we and they be. *Particularly*, God's Honour in the World ought to appear infinitely more valuable and precious than our own, and therefore our own ought to ſeem as a Thing of no Worth compared with his, and as ſuch, to be freely parted with when God's Honour calls for it. And as free ſhould we be, to ſee the Reputation of our deareſt Friends given up for God's ſake. The ſame may be ſaid of our worldly Intereſt and of all our worldly Comforts, when compared with God's Intereſt and the Intereſt of his Son's Kingdom in the World, and of the worldly Intereſts and Comforts of our deareſt Friends. All, both ours, and their's, is comparatively nothing, & ought to appear ſo to us. Yea, our Lives and their Lives, are juſt the ſame Things, comparatively, of no Worth, and to be parted with in a Moment, without the leaſt Reluctancy, when God's Honour, or Intereſt calls therefor.—2. In order to a right underſtanding of this Standard, we muſt alſo obſerve, that our Love to our ſelves is *habitual*, *unfeigned*, *fervent*, *active* and *permanent*. So alſo muſt be our Love to our Neighbours.—3. A regular Self-love reſpects *all* our Intereſts, but eſpecially our *ſpiritual* and *eternal* Intereſt. So ought our Love to our Neighbours. — 4. A regular Self-love naturally prompts us to be concerned for our Welfare *tenderly*, to ſeek it *diligently* and *prudently*, to rejoyce in it *heartily*, and to be grieved for our Calamities *ſincerely*. So ought our Love to our Neighbours to prompt us to feel and conduct with Regard to their Welfare.—5. Self-love makes us take an *unfeigned Pleaſure* in promoting our own Welfare. We don't think it *hard*, to do ſo much for our ſelves. The *Pleaſure*

sure we take in promoting our Welfare, *rewards* our *Pains*. The same genuine kind of Love ought we to have to our Neighbour; and so to remember the Words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* —6. We ought never to speak of our Neighbour's Sins, or Weaknesses, or any way expose him to Shame and Contempt in the World, in any Case whatsoever, except such wherein it would be our Duty to be willing our selves to be so exposed by him, were we in his Circumstances, and he in ours. And then we are to do it, with that sensible Tenderness for him, that we could reasonably desire from him, towards us, in a like Case.

Thus then we have briefly considered the second great Command of the Law, and see what that meaneth, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.*—— To love God with all our Heart, lays a Foundation, and prepares the Way, for us to love our Neighbours as our selves. It removes and takes away those Things which are contrary to this Love, such as Pride, Selfishness, Worldliness, a narrow, stingy, envious, revengeful Temper. True Love to God mortifies and kills these Things at Root. And *secondly*, True Love to God assimilates us to the divine Nature, and makes us like God in the Temper of our Minds. But God is Love. And the more we are like God, the more are our Hearts therefore framed to Love & Benevolence. *He that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, & God in him.* Love to God sweetens the Soul, & enlarges our Hearts to love our Fellow-Men. And *thirdly*, The more we love God, the more sacred is his Authority with us, and the more glorious, amiable and animating does his Example appear, and the greater Sense have we of our Obligations to Gratitude to him; all which tend jointly to influence us to all Love & Goodness towards our Neighbours. So that, he that knows God and loves him, will be full of Love to Mankind. And therefore *he that loveth not, knoweth not God*, 1 Joh. 4. 8. — On the other Hand, where there is no true Love to God, there is no true Love to Mankind; but the Heart is under the Government of Pride, Selfishness, and other Corruptions, which are contrary to Love. So that a genuine Love to Mankind is peculiar to the godly. 1 *Joh.* 4. 7, 8.

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And now from what has been said, we may evidently see, these following Sorts of Love to our Neighbour, are neither of them the Love required, however nearly they may sometimes seem to resemble it.

1. What is commonly called *natural Compassion*, is not the Love here required. For the most wicked profane Man may be of a very compassionate Temper: So may the proud, the selfish, the envious, the malicious & spightful Man: As Experience plainly shews. And besides, natural Compassion does not take its Rise from any Sense of the Rectitude and Fitness of Things, or any Regard to the divine Authority, but merely from the animal Constitution: And Men seem to be properly passive in it. It is much the same Thing in the humane, as in the brutal Nature. It is therefore a different Thing from the Love here required.

2. The same may be said of what is called *Good-Nature*. It arises merely from animal Constitution, and is not the Love here required. For such a Man is not influenced in his Love by the Reason and Nature of Things, or the Authority of the great Governour of the World, or from a Consideration of the infinite Goodness of the divine Nature, any more than the Beasts are, who are some of them much better tempered than others. So that this Sort of Love has nothing of the Nature of Religion in it. And it is evident that many wicked & ungodly Men have much of this natural Good-temper, who yet have no Regard to God or Duty. Yea, a secret Grudge against a Neighbour, reigning in the Heart, may be in the *good-natur'd* Man, consistent with his *Good-nature*; but it is not consistent with the Love here required. And therefore they are evidently *two* Things.

3. That Love which is commonly called *natural Affection*, is not the Love here required. It is true, *that* Man is worse than the Beasts, who is without natural Affection, for they evidently are not: but every Man is not a Saint, because he has natural Affection. And it is true, we owe a peculiar Love, according to God's Law, to our Relatives; but natural Affection is not *it*. For there are many ungodly Wretches, who care neither for God nor his Law, who have

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as much natural Affection as any in the World. Yea, it is a common Thing for ungodly Parents to make very Idols of their Children: for them, they go and run and work and toil, by Night & Day, to the utter neglect of God and their own Souls. And surely this can't be the very Love which God requires. And besides, as natural Affection naturally prompts Parents to love their Children more than God, and be more concerned for their Welfare than for his Glory, so it is commonly a Bar in the Way of their loving others as they ought. They have nothing to give to the Poor and Needy, to the Widow and Fatherless: they must lay up all for their Children. Yea, many Times they rake and scrape, cheat and defraud, and like mere Earth-Worms bury themselves in the World; and all this, for the sake of their Children. And yet all this Love to their Children does not prompt them to take Care of their Souls. They never teach their Children to pray, nor instruct them to seek after God. They love their Bodies, but care little for their Souls. Their Love to the one is beyond all Bounds, but to the other is little or nothing. 'Tis an irrational Fondness, and not the Love required. Indeed if Parents loved their Children as they ought to do, their *Love* would effectually influence them to take Care of their Souls, and do all their Duty to them; which *natural Affection* evidently does not. And therefore it is not that Love, with which God in his Law requires Parents to love their Children. Nor indeed does there seem to be any more of the Nature of true Virtue or real Religion in the *natural Affection* of Men, than there is in the natural Affection of Beasts: both resulting merely from animal Nature and a natural Self-love, without any Regard to the Reason and Nature of Things.

4. Nor is that the Love here required, which arises merely from a *Party-Spirit*. Because such a one is of their Party, and on their Side, and loves those whom they love, and will plead, stand up, and contend for them, and maintain their Cause. For such a Love is pregnant with Hatred and Ill-Will to every Body else. And nothing will humour and gratify it more than to see the opposite Party hated, reviled and blackned. And besides, such a Love is nothing but

but Self-love in another Shape. *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy: But I say unto you, Love your Enemies.* Mat. 5.43,44.

5. Nor is that the Love here required, which arises merely from *others Love to me*. As if a rich Man is kind and bountiful to poor People all around him, and appears to love and pity them; they, tho' almost ever so wicked, will feel a Sort of Love to him. But if this rich Man happens to be a civil Magistrate, and is called to sit as a Judge in their Case, and passes Judgment against them for their Crimes, now their Love dies, and Enmity and Hatred and Revenge begin to ferment in their Hearts. In this Case, it is not the *Man* they love, but rather his *Kindnesses*. And their seeming Love, is nothing but a certain Operation of Self-love.—— And indeed however full of Love Persons may seem to be to their Neighbours, if all arises *merely from Self-love*, or is for *Self-ends*, nothing is genuine: and that whether Things worldly, or Things religious, occasion their Love. A poor Man will love and honour those that are rich; if he hopes to get any Thing by it. A rich Man may be kind to the Poor, with an Eye to his Credit. An awakened Sinner will love an awakening Preacher, in hopes he shall be converted by his Ministry. A Minister may seem to shew a World of Love to the Souls of Sinners, and all with an Eye to Applause. Hypocrites will love a godly Minister, so long as he thinks well of them, and happens not to detect their hypocrisy in his publick Preaching. Even the *Galatians* were very full of Love to *Paul* for a while, so long as they thought he loved them, and had been the Instrument of their Conversion; yet afterwards they lost their Love, and turned his Enemies, for his telling them the Truth. While others, who loved him truly for what he was, were more and more knit unto him, for those very Doctrines for which the *Galatians* hated him. *If ye love them which love you, what Reward have ye? Do not the Publicans the same?* Mat. 5.46. There is no Virtue nor Religion in such a Kind of Love, and it is evidently *not the Thing* required by the divine Law. And indeed it is a Thing as difficult and as contrary to corrupt Nature, for us genuinely to love our Neighbours as our selves, as it is to love God

God with all our Hearts. And there is as little true Love between Man and Man, as there is between Men and God. It is for our Interest to love God, and it is for our Interest to love our Neighbours, and therefore Men *make as if* they did so, when really there is nothing genuine and true. And at the Day of Judgment, when a wicked World comes to God's Bar, and their past Conduct is all brought to Light, nothing will be more manifest than that there never was a Spark of true Love to God or Man in their Hearts, but that from first to last they were acted and governed either by their animal Constitution, or else merely by Self-love.

6. I may add, nor is that the Love required, when Men love others *merely because they are as bad, and so just like themselves.* Nature and Self-Love will prompt the worst of Men to do so. The vain and profligate love such as are as bad as themselves. And from the same Principle erroneous Persons have a peculiar Regard for one another. And the Enthusiast and blazing Hypocrite may from the same Principle seem to be full of Love to their own Sort, tho' full of Malice against all others. And they may think that it is *the Image of God* which they love in their Brethren: when indeed it is only *the Image of themselves.* Persons of a *bad Taste* may greatly delight in those Things in others, which are very odious in the Sight of God. But surely this can't be the Love required. And yet by this very Thing many a Hypocrite thinks himself a true Saint.

Thus we see what it is to love God with all our Hearts, and our Neighbours as our selves, and see these two distinguished from their Counterfeits. And so we have gone thro' the two great Commands of the Law, in a Conformity to which, the very Essence of Religion does much consist.

And now it is added by our Saviour, *Upon these two hang all the Law and the Prophets.*—— The Law and the Prophets, *i. e.* the inspired Writings of the Old-Testament consider these two Maxims, *that we must love God with all our Hearts, and our Neighbours as ourselves,* as *first* and *Foundation-Principles:* and all the various Duties which they urge, respecting God and our Fellow-Men, are but so many *Inferences* and *Deductions* from them.

God

God must be loved with all the Heart.—— And therefore we must make him our God and none else, according to the *first Command.*—— Worship him according to his appointed Institutions, agreable to the *second Command.*—With becoming Reverence & Devotion, according to the *third.*—And that in all such set Times as he hath appointed in his Word, according to the *fourth.*

Our Neighbour must be loved as our selves. — And therefore we must render Honour to whom Honour is due, according to the *fifth Command.* And be tender of our Neighbour's Life, Chastity, Estate & good Name, according to the *sixth*, *seventh*, *eighth* and *ninth Commands.* And rejoyce in his Welfare and Prosperity, according to the *tenth.* And in all Things treat him as we could reasonably desire him to treat us, according to that golden Rule of Jesus Christ, in *Matth.* 7. 12.

And as all the Duties we owe to God and Man, are thus in the *Theory*, but so many *Deductions* necessarily flowing from these two *Maxims* or *first Principles*; so when the Law of God is written in the Heart of a Sinner by divine Grace, and put in his inward Parts; there will, from these two Principles, naturally flow all Duties to God and his Neighbour, in his daily Practice: i. e. from a Disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, he will naturally be inclined and enabled sincerely to do all his Will; to make him his GOD, according to the first Command, to worship him according to his own Appointments, with becoming Reverence, and at all suitable Times, according to the rest. It will be his *Nature* to do all this, his Meat and his Drink, and so his greatest Delight.— And so also, from a genuine Disposition to love his Neighbour as himself, he will be naturally inclined and enabled, in all Things, and at all Times, sincerely to do as he would be done by. It will be his *Nature* to do so, his Meat and his Drink, and so his greatest Delight. *Heb.* 8. 10. *Joh.* 15. 14. 1 *Joh.* 2. 3, 4. *Psal.* 19. 10.

So that, as it is in *Theory*, so also it is in *Practice*; these two are like the *Seed* that virtually contains the whole Plant, or like the *Root* from which the whole Tree grows, with all its Branches,

Branches and Fruit. And in Proportion as a Man loves God and his Neighbour with a genuine Love, in the same Proportion, will his Inclination and Ability thence arising be, to do all these Duties. And consequently when his Love to God and his Neighbour arrives to *Perfection*, he will be *perfectly* inclined and enabled to be *perfect* in Holiness and Righteousness, and will *actually*, in *all* Things, *perfectly* conform to both Tables of the Law. And it is equally evident, that until a Man has a genuine Love to God and his Neighbour in his Heart, he will have neither Inclination nor Ability (in a moral and spiritual Sense) to perform one Act of true Obedience. For as *all true Obedience*, according to the Law and Prophets, is to flow from these two Principles; so consequently, according to the Law and Prophets, *that* is *not true Obedience*, which *does not*. And therefore when all a Man's Religion, is merely from Self-love, and for Self-ends, he cannot be said, strictly speaking, to do *any Duty* to God or his Neighbour, or *obey one Command*; for he only *serves himself*, and that from a supreme Love to himself, which the Law and the Prophets do not require, but *strictly forbid*, in that they enjoin the *direct contrary*.

So that now, in a few Words, we may here see, *wherein true Religion does consist*, as it stands distinguished from all the *false* Religion in the World. The godly Man, from seeing God to be just such a One as he is, and from a real Sense of his infinite Glory and Amiableness in being such, is thereby influenced to love him supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively: from which *inward Frame of Heart*, he freely runs the Way of God's Commands, and is in his Element when doing God's Will. He eats, he drinks, he works, he prays, and does all Things, with a single Eye for God; who has placed him in this his World, allotted to him his peculiar Station, and pointed out before him all the Business of Life: always looking to him for all Things, and always giving Thanks unto his Name, for all his unspeakable Goodness to a Wretch so infinitely unworthy. And, with a Spirit of disinterested Impartiality and genuine Benevolence, he views his Fellow-Men, gives them their Places,

takes his own, and loves them as himſelf: Their Welfare is dear to him; he is grieved at their Miſeries, and rejoyces at their Mercies, and delights to do all the Good he can, to every one, in the Place and Station which God has ſet him in. And he finds and feels that this *new* and *divine Temper* is inwrought in his *very Nature*; ſo that inſtead of a forced Religion, or a Religion merely by Fits, his *very Heart* is *habitually* bent and inclined to ſuch Views and Apprehenſions, to ſuch an inward Temper, and to ſuch an outward Conduct.

This, this is the Religion of the Bible, the Religion which the Law and the Prophets, and which Chriſt and his Apoſtles too, all join to teach! The Religion, which Chriſt came into the World to recover Men unto, and to which the Spirit of God does actually recover every Believer, in a greater or leſſer Degree. Thus thoſe *who are dead in Sin, are quickened*, Eph. 2. 1. *Have the Law written in their Hearts*, Heb. 8. 10. *Are made new Creatures, all old Things being done away, and all Things become new*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. And are effectually *taught to deny all Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent World*, Tit. 2. 12. And ſo *ſerve God without fear, in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, all the Days of their Lives*, Luk. 1. 74, 75.

And *this* is ſpecifically different, from every Sort of falſe Religion in the World. For all Kinds of falſe Religion, however different in other Things, yet all agree in this, to reſult merely from a Principle of Self-love, whereby fallen Men, being ignorant of God, are inclined to love themſelves ſupremely, and do all Things for themſelves ultimately. All the idolatrous Religion of the heathen World, in which ſome took much Pains, had its Riſe from this Principle. They had ſome Notion of a future State, of a Heaven and a Hell, as well as of temporal Rewards and Puniſhments, and ſo were moved by Hope and Fear, from a Principle of Self love, to do ſomething to pacify the Anger of the Gods, and recommend themſelves to the Favour of their Deities. And all the Superſtitions of the ſeemingly devout Papiſt, his *Pater-noſters*, his *Ave-maria's*, his *Penances* and *Pilgrimages*, and endleſs Toils, ſtill ariſe from

from the same Principle. So does all the Religion of Formalists and legal Hypocrites in the reformed Nations; 'tis a slavish fear of Hell and mercenary hope of Heaven, which, from a Principle of Self-love, sets all a going. Yea, the evangelical Hypocrite, who *mightily* talks of supernatural divine Light, of the Spirit's Operations, of Conversion, and a new Nature, still after all, has no higher Principle in him than Self-love. His Conscience has been greatly enlightned, and his Heart terrified, and his Corruptions stunned: and he has, by the Delusions of Satan, obtained a strong Confidence of the Love of God and pardon of his Sins; so that instead of being influenced chiefly by the fear of Hell, as the legal Hypocrite is, he is ravished with Heaven; but still all is from Self-love, and for Self-ends. And properly and scripturally speaking, he neither knows God, nor cares at all for him. And this is the very Case with every *graceless* Man living, of *whatever Denomination*; whether a *Heathen* or *Jew* or *Christian*, whether *Papist* or *Protestant*, whether *Church-man*, *Presbyterian*, *Congregationalist* or *Separatist*, whether a *Pelagian*, *Arminian*, *Calvinist*, *Antinomian*, *Baptist* or *Quaker*. And this is the Case with every *graceless* Man living, *whatever his Attainments may otherwise be*; tho' he hath all Knowledge to understand all Mysteries, and can speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, and has Faith to remove Mountains, and Zeal enough to give all his Goods to feed the Poor, and his Body to be burned; yet he has no *Charity*, he is perfectly destitute of this genuine Love to God and his Neighbour, and has no higher Principle in his Heart, from which all his Religion proceeds, but a supreme Love to himself. For ever since our first Parents aspired to be as Gods, it has been the *Nature* of all Mankind to love themselves supremely, and to be blind to the infinite Beauty of the divine Nature; and it remains so to be with all, until renewed by divine Grace. So that Self-love is the highest Principle, from which, unregenerate Men do ever act, or can act.

Here therefore we have true Religion, a Religion specifically different from all other Sorts of Religion in the World, standing in a clear View. Yea, and we may be absolutely certain, that this is the very Thing which has

been described. For this Conformity to the moral Law, is throughout all the Bible, by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, by *Christ* and his *Apostles*, represented to be the very Thing in which the Essence of Religion originally consists. "Blessed "be the Name of the Lord for ever, who has given us so "clear a Revelation of his Will, and so sure and certain a "Guide as his Word." Come here, all you poor exercised broken-hearted Saints, that live in this dark benighted World, where many run to and fro, and where there are a thousand different Opinions, and every one confident that he is right. Come here to the Law and to the Testimony; come here to Christ himself, and learn what the Truth is, and be settled, be confirmed, and be established for ever. And remember and practise upon those Words of Jesus Christ, in Joh. 7. 17. *If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God.* O, read the Bible, live Lives of Prayer and Communion with God; yea, die to your selves, the World & Sin, and return home to God thro' Jesus Christ, and love him and live to him, and delight in him more and more; and be more & more disinterested and impartial, sincere and fervent, in your Love to your Neighbours; do all the Good to every one that you can. In a Word, be the Servants of God, and grow up into his Image, and your Certainty of divine Truths will proportionably strengthen and increase. For the more your Understandings are free from that Darkness and Prejudice that Sin has introduced, the clearer will you view divine Truths, and the greater Sense will you have of their inherent divine Glory; and so your Belief of their Divinity will be the more unshaken.

Having thus gone thro' with what was proposed, *a general Improvement* of the whole, is all that now remains. And indeed much Use may be made of these great Truths, which have been thus explained and proved, for our *Instruction* in some of the most controverted Points in Religion, and to *clear up* the Believer's gracious State, and also to promote *our Humiliation* and *Thankfulness* and *universal Obedience*.

Section

Section V.

Right Apprehensions of the Law, useful to clear up some of the most controverted Points in Religion.

USE I. *Of Instruction.* We have seen what the Law of God requires, and the infinite Obligations we are under perfectly to conform to it; we have seen wherein a genuine Conformity to the Law consists, and how a genuine Conformity to it differs from all Counterfeits; and what has been said may help us to understand the following Particulars.

1. *Wherein consisted the moral Image of God, in which* Adam *was created.* That *Adam* was created in the Image of God, is expresly affirmed, in Gen. 1. 27. *So God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him.* And from these Words we have just the same Reason to believe that *Adam* was created in the *moral*, as that he was in the *natural*, Image of God; because they tell us in plain Terms, without any Distinction or Exception (nor is there any that can be gathered from any other Text) that he was created in the *Image of God*; but the *moral* as well as the *natural* Perfections of God are equally contained in *his Image.* As to the *political* Image of God, *Adam*, strictly speaking, was not created in that; because as the Scriptures inform us, it was *after* his Creation that he was made *Lord* of this lower World. *Gen.* 1.28. And it is, I think, with less Propriety, that *this* is by *Divines* called the *Image* of God; I do not know that it is any where so called in Scripture; and God, was the same, he is now, before he sustained the Character of supreme Lord and Governour of the World. His *natural* and *moral* Perfections comprised his *whole* Image before the World was created. And in this *his Image* was his Creature Man created. Not in Part of his Image, for there is no such Intimation in all the Bible. But in *his Image*, comprising his *moral*, as well, and as much, as his *natural* Perfections.

Now the *moral Image* of God does radically consist in a *Temper of Mind* or *Frame of Heart* perfectly answerable to the *moral Law*: the *moral Law* being as it were *a Transcript of the moral Perfections of God*. So that from what has been said of the Nature of the moral Perfections of God and of the Nature of the moral Law, we may learn wherein consisted that moral Image of God in which *Adam* was created. He had a *perfect moral Rectitude* of Heart, a perfectly *right Temper* of Mind; and so was perfectly disposed to love God with all his Heart, and his Neighbours (if he had had any) as himself: Was perfectly disposed to give God his Place, and take his own; and consider God as being what he was, and be affected and act accordingly; and to consider his Fellow-Men (if he had had any) as being what they were, and feel and act accordingly. And in this Image of God was he created, as the Scriptures teach us; i. e. He was brought into Existence with such a Temper *connatural* to him.

Now here is a new-made Creature in a new World, viewing God and wondring at his infinite Glory, looking all round, astonish'd at the divine Perfections shining forth in all his Works. He views the spacious Heavens, they declare to him the Glory of the Lord: He sees his Wisdom and his Power, he wonders and adores. He looks round upon all his Works, they clearly discover to him the invisible Things of God, even his eternal Power and Godhead, and he stands amazed. God makes him Lord of this lower World, appoints to him his daily Employment, and puts him into a State of Trial, setting *Life* and *Death* before him; and he sees the infinite Wisdom, Holiness, Justice and Goodness of God in all, he falls down and worships, he exults in God, and, with all his Heart, gives up himself to God with sweetest Delight. All is genuine, natural and free, resulting from the native Temper of his Heart.

Here he beheld God in his infinite Glory, viewed his Works, contemplated his Perfections, admired and adored him, with a Sweetness and Pleasure of Soul most refined! Here he saw God in all the Trees Plants and Herbs in the Garden, his happy Seat, while out of Love to God and

Duty

Duty he attended his daily Business, he eat and drank and blest his great Benefactor! He saw that it was infinitely reasonable, that he should love God with all his Heart, and obey him in every Thing, if eternal Life had not at all been promised: both because God infinitely deserved it at his Hand, and also in doing thereof there was the greatest Satisfaction and Delight. And he saw that if he, in any Thing, should disobey his sovereign Lord and rightful Governour, it would be right, infinite right, that he should be miserable for ever, even if God had never so threatned: because to disobey *such a God* appeared to him an infinite Evil. He looked upon the Promise of eternal Life, as a mere free Bounty. He looked upon the Threatening of Death, as impartial Justice. And while he considered *eternal Life* under the Notion of a REWARD promised to perfect Obedience from God his Governour, he saw his infinite Love to Righteousness therein, as well as his infinite Bounty. And while he considered *Death* under the Notion of a PUNISHMENT threatened against Sin, he saw God's infinite Hatred of Iniquity therein, as well as his impartial Justice. And when he saw how God loved Righteousness and hated Iniquity, and beheld his infinite Goodness on the one Hand and impartial Justice on the other, he was ravished. Now he saw plainly what God was, and his infinite Glory in being such, and loved him with all his Heart. It was *natural* to account such a God infinitely amiable, and it was *natural* to love him with all his Heart. Allwas genuine and free, resulting from the *native Temper* of his Mind.

These being his Views and Apprehensions, and this his Nature; hence altho' he was under a Covenant of Works, yet the Hopes of Happiness and the Fears of Misery were not the *original* and *first Spring* of his Love to God: it was not originally from Self-love and for Self-ends, but from a Sense of the Beauty of the divine Nature; and so it was not forced and hypocritical, but free and genuine: it did not feel like a Burden, but it was esteemed a Priviledge; and instead of being disposed to think it MUCH to love God with all his Heart and obey him in every Thing, he rather thought it infinitely *right* and *fit* as being God's *due*,

and that he deserved no thanks from God, but rather was under infinite Obligations to give thanks to God for ever, for such an infinite *Priviledge*. And thus we see wherein that *moral Image* of God consisted in which *Adam* was created.

2. From all which, *it is a plain Matter of Fact, that we are born into the World entirely destitute of the moral Image of God.* So certain as that the moral Image of God radically consists in such a Temper, and makes it natural to have such like Views and Dispositions; so certain we are in Fact born without it. Look into Children, and there is nothing to be seen of these Things. And we are all sure that such a Temper and such-like Views and Dispositions are not natural to us; yea, most Men are sure there is still no such Thing in them; and very many believe there is no such Thing in the World.——*We are* in Fact *born like the wild Asse's Colt*, as senseless of God, and as void and destitute of Grace. We have *Nature*, but no *Grace*: a *Taste* for *natural Good*, but no *Relish* for *moral Beauty*: an *Appetite* for *Happiness*, but *no Appetite* for *Holiness*. A Heart easily affected and governed by selfish Considerations, but blind to the moral Rectitude and Fitness of Things. And so we have a Heart to love our selves, but no Heart to love God; and may be moved to act by selfish Views, but can't be influenced by the infinite moral Beauty of the divine Nature. *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh:* Joh. 3. 6. And will only mind and relish Things which suit its Nature; *Rom.* 8. 5. But is blind to spiritual Things. 1 *Cor.* 2. 14 —— True indeed, in Children there are many *natural Excellencies*, many Things pleasing and agreeable. They sometimes, in a good mood, appear loving and kind, innocent and harmless, humble and meek; and so does a Lamb or young Puppy. There is nothing but *Nature* in these Appearances. It's owing to their animal Constitution, and to their being pleased and humour'd. It is all from no higher Principle than Self-love. Cross them, and they will presently feel and act bad enough. They have in their Temper and most early Conduct no Regard to God or Duty, or to the Reason and Nature of Things, but are moved and affected merely as Things please or displease them, making

making their Happiness their last End. And indeed, if the Image of God, Holiness, or Grace, or whatever we call it, be really such a Thing as has been said, then nothing of such a Nature, can possibly be more plain and evident than this universally is, that Mankind are in Fact born into the World destitute, entirely destitute thereof. *Job.* 11. 12. And hence, we must *be born again.* Joh. 3. 3, 6.

Obj. *But where then was the Propriety of Christ's saying in Matth.* 18. 3. Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven? *Is it not here supposed, that little Children are Patterns of Humility and Goodness?*

Answ. And where was the Propriety of those Words in *Isaiah* 53. 7. Where the Prophet speaking of Christ's Meekness and Patience under his Sufferings, he says, *As a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb, so he opened not his Mouth?* Is it not here supposed, that *Sheep are Patterns of Meekness and Patience?* The Truth is, that these Allusions do not prove, that either Sheep or little Children naturally have any real Humility or Meekness, of a gracious Nature, but only an Appearance of it. And just of the same Nature are those Phrases in *Matth.* 10. 16. *As wise as Serpents, as harmless as Doves.* But as these Scriptures do not prove, that *Sheep* and *Serpents*, and *Doves* have Grace, so neither does that other Text prove that *little Children* naturally have it.

3. By comparing our selves with the holy Law of God, as it has been already explained, we may also learn, that we are born into the World not only destitute of a Conformity to it, but are also *natively diametrically contrary thereto in the Temper of our Hearts.* The Law requires us *to love God supremely*, but the native Bent of our Hearts is to *love our selves supremely.* The Law requires us *to live to God ultimately*, but the native Bent of our Hearts is *to live to our selves ultimately.* The Law requires us *to delight in God superlatively*, but the native Bent of our Hearts is *to delight in that which is not God, wholly.* And finally the Law requires us *to love our Neighbours as our selves*, but the native Bent of our Hearts is *to be inordinately selfish.*

These are the earliest Dispositions that are discovered in our Nature. And altho' I don't think that they are con-

created

created by God together with the Essence of our Souls, yet they seem to be the very first Propensities of the new-made Soul. So that they are in a Sense *connatural*; our whole Hearts are perfectly and intirely bent this Way, from their very first Motion. These Propensities perhaps in some Sense may be said to be *contracted*, in Opposition to their being strictly and philosophically *natural*; because they are not created by God with the Essence of the Soul, but result from its native Choice, or rather more strictly are themselves its native Choice. But most certainly these Propensities are not *contracted*, in the Sense that many vicious Habits be, namely, by long Use and Custom. In opposition to *such* vicious Habits, they may be called *connatural*. Little Children do very early bad Things, and contract bad Dispositions; but these Propensities are evidently antecedent to every bad Thing infused or instilled by evil Examples, or gotten by Practice, or occasioned by Temptations. And hence it is become customary to call them *natural*, and to say that it is our *very Nature* to be so inclined. And to say that these Propensities are *natural*, would to common People be the most apt Way of expressing the Thing; but it ought to be remembered, that they are not *natural* in the same Sense as the *Faculties* of our Souls be: for they are not the Workmanship of God, but are our native Choice, and the voluntary, free, spontaneous Bent of our Hearts. And to keep up this Distinction, I frequently choose to use the Word *native*, instead of *natural*.

And now, that these Dispositions are, as it were, thus born with us, is as evident from Experience as any Thing of such a Kind can be; for these are the earliest Dispositions that Man's Nature discovers, and are evidently discovered before little Children are capable of learning them from others; yea, 'tis plainly the very native bent of their Hearts to love themselves above all, to make their Ease Comfort and Happiness their last End and their All, and to seek for all from the *Creature*; or in other Words, *from that which is not God*. This is plain to every one's Observation, nor did I ever hear any one, as I remember, venture to deny it.

And

And as Children grow up, and their natural Powers enlarge, so these Propensities grow up, and strengthen, and become more active, and discover themselves plainer; and from this Root, this evil Fountain, many bad Things soon proceed. Observe Children thro' all the Days of Childhood, and this Nature may be easily seen in them, they discover it in all their Conduct in ten thousand Instances; and there it does and will remain. We may break them of many bad Tricks which they learn, and bad Habits which they contract; but we can't change this their Nature. They are disposed to love themselves supremely, seek their own Ends ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly: nor can we turn this Bent of their Hearts. We can after a Sort instil good Principles into them, learn them to read and pray; and after a Sort to honour their Parents, and love their Neighbours; we can make them civil and sober and humble and modest and religious in a Sort, but still their *old Nature* remains in its full Power. It is restrained, but not altered at all; yea, and after all, these their native Dispositions have the entire Government of them. Their whole Hearts are as much bent this Way as ever. And these Propensities govern them in their inward Temper, and in all their Conduct. They do all from Self-love and for Self-Ends, and are seeking Happiness, not in God, but in something else. These Things are plain to every impartial Observer, nor can they be denied by any. Thus *we are* all *shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin are we conceived.* And *we are Transgressors from the Womb, and go astray as soon as we are born.*

And if we leave Children and look into our selves, we may easily observe that we are naturally of the same Temper, inclined to love our selves supremely, and do all from Self-love and for Self-Ends, and seek for Happiness, not in God, but in something else. We can remember when and how we contracted many other vicious Habits, and feel some inward Power to get rid of them; but these Propensities we have always had, and they are natural, and our whole Hearts are so in them, that it is not in us so much as sincerely to desire to be otherwise. It is true, we may, in a Sort, desire and try to alter this our Nature, from

Considerations of Duty, of Heaven and Hell; but it is all Hypocrisy: for we still act merely from Self-love and for Self-ends as much as ever. We have naturally no Disposition to desire to love God, only for Self-ends. All Men are conscious to themselves that this is true.

We are naturally *entirely under the Government* of these Dispositions, in *all Things*, and under *all Circumstances*.—*IN ALL THINGS*; In all our civil and religious Concerns. It is merely from Self-love and for Self-ends, that natural Men follow their worldly Business; and endeavour to live peaceably with their Neighbours: and in these Things they are seeking Blessedness. And it is merely from Self-love and for Self-ends they do any Thing in Religion; either they mean to be seen of Men, or are moved from a slavish Fear of Hell and mercenary Hope of Heaven, or from some other selfish Consideration.—— And *UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES*, we are naturally under the Government of these Dispositions. *In Prosperity*; then, from an Inclination to love our selves supremely, seek our own Happiness ultimately, and delight in that which is not God, wholly, it is our Nature to rejoice and be glad. And from the same Inclination we are disposed to mourn & murmur and be discontented *under Adversity*. At the *red Sea* it was natural for the *Israelites* to sing Praise: at the *bitter Waters* it was as natural to murmur. When we are pleased, then we are glad; when we are cross'd, then we are sad; but naturally we don't care how it goes with God's Interest in the World, what becomes of his great Name, or whether his Honour sinks or swims. No, there is but here and there a *Moses* that cares any Thing about this: but if they can have their own Wills, and secure their own Interests, they are content.—— While the Spirit of God lets Sinners alone and they live secure and unconcerned, then from the aforesaid Propensities they are after the World; one after one Thing, and another after another: and altho' they may keep up a Form of Religion for fashion sake, yet really they care nothing about God and Things eternal. When they come to be awakened to a Concern for their Souls, tho' they reform their Lives and take very different Courses from what they used to do, yet still all is from the same

Principle

Principle and for the same End. They have new Lives, but the same Nature. They don't really care for God or his Glory any more than they used to do, nor take any Content in him, but are only after Pardon of Sin and Peace of Conscience, which according to their present Sensations and Apprehensions, they think would make them happy. Sinners don't really seek for Blessedness in God himself, but in something they hope to receive from him. And hence when awakened Sinners come to get false Comfort, think they are pardoned, and so have Peace; or think that Christ loves them, and that they shall go to Heaven, and so are filled with Joy; as all their Joy results from Self-love merely, so all they rejoyce in, is what they think they have received, and what they hope yet to receive; but they don't really care for God himself, (whose Glory they never saw,) any more than they used to do, nor rejoyce in *Him*: and hence (ordinarily) having their Consciences quieted, they soon go back to the World again for real Comfort and Blessedness. Or if after false Comfort they turn Enthusiasts, and get to *blazing*, and wax hotter and hotter, and seem to be full of nothing but Love to God and Zeal for his Glory; it is Visions and Dreams, Revelations and Impulses, a firm Perswasion they are the peculiar Favourites of Heaven, and the Applause of their Party, which they live upon and take Comfort in, and by which they are animated; and all from Self-love and for Self-Ends: but in Deed and in Truth, they neither know God, nor regard him nor his Glory, nor live upon him, nor delight in him, any more than they used to do: And thus in all Things, and under all Circumstances, unregenerate Men are governed by a Disposition to love themselves supremely, live to themselves ultimately, and delight in that *which is not God* wholly. And whosoever is well acquainted with Mankind may easily see that this is in Fact the very Case, and will naturally be led to make the same Observation with the Apostle *Paul*, in Phil. 2. 21. *All seek their own, and not the Things which are Jesus Christ's.*

And now this Disposition, which is thus evidently natural to all Mankind, *is directly contrary to God's holy Law, is exceeding sinful, and is the Root of all Wickedness.* First,

it

it is diametrically oppoſite to God's holy Law. For this requires us to love God ſupremely and ſeek his Glory ultimately; in direct Contrariety whereunto, we are naturally inclined to love our ſelves ſupremely and live to our ſelves ultimately. Again, the Law requires us to delight in God ſuperlatively and chooſe him and live upon as the only Portion of our Souls; in direct Contrariety whereunto, we are naturally inclined to place our whole Hearts upon other Things, and live upon them and take Content in them. Finally, the Law requires us to love our Neighbour as our ſelves and do as we would be done by; in direct Contrariety whereunto, we are naturally inclined to be inordinately ſelfiſh, and ſo not to do as we would be done by. And thus we are all naturally *gone out of the Way*, and in the Temper of our own Minds *become corrupt, filthy and unprofitable, and there is none righteous; no, not one.* Pſal. 14. Rom. 3. 10.—19. We have loſt the Image of God, we have loſt a right Temper of Mind, we have loſt a governing Senſe of the moral Fitneſs of Things, have no Eyes to ſee moral Beauty, or Hearts to taſte and reliſh the moral Excellency of ſpiritual and divine Things. 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. Hence, in God we can ſee no Form nor Comelineſs, nor in him at all delight; yea, 'tis natural for it to ſeem to us as if there was no God. *Pſal.* 14. 1. And now, as tho' in very Deed there were no God for us to be in Subjection unto, we ſet up for our ſelves, to make our own Intereſt our laſt End, and to ſeek Bleſſedneſs, not in God, but in ſomething elſe; and are naturally inclined, without any Regard to God's Law, to make our own Wills our only Rule; and now, having caſt off the Government of God, and forſaken the Fountain of living Waters, we go every one his Way, one to his Farm, another to his Merchandiſe, all *ſerving divers Luſts and Pleaſures.*—So that it might juſtly be wondered at, how any among Mankind ſhould ever have it enter into their Hearts, to imagine that we are not fallen Creatures, univerſally depraved, when it is ſo evidently a plain Matter of Fact. I think, it can be owing to nothing, but Men's Ignorance of the Law, in it's ſpiritual Nature, Purity, Strictneſs and Extent, and their not comparing themſelves therewith. And indeed St. *Paul* tells us that this is the Caſe.

Rom.

Rom. 7. 8. *For without the Law Sin was dead.* For did Men but rightly apprehend that God is such a one as the Law speaks him to be, and that he requires us to be what really he does, they could not possibly but see their native Contrariety to God and his holy Law. The *Israelites* of old felt their Contrariety to their Prophets, and they hated them and put them to Death; and the *Pharisees* felt their Contrariety to Christ and his Apostles, and hated them and put them to Death; for they perceived what their Prophets, and what Christ and his Apostles were driving at: but yet all the while they imagined they loved God and loved his Law, because they neither knew God nor understood his Law. And even so it is at this Day. If an *Arminian* or *Pelagian* (for after all their Pretences, they are, by Nature, just like the rest of Mankind) did but verily believe God just such an One as the godly Man in fact sees him to be, he would feel as great a Contrariety to him and Enmity against him as any *Calvinist* ever supposed there was in natural Men. They frame a false Image of God in their own Fancies, to suit the vitiated Taste of their corrupt Hearts, and then cry, *We are not Enemies to God; no, but it is natural for us to love him.* When all the while, their native Aversion to God, will not so much as suffer them to believe, that there is *any such Being*, as *really* he is. But to proceed,

The aforesaid Dispositon and Bent of Heart, which is thus directly contrary to the Law, *is exceeding sinful.* For while we love our selves supremely and live to our selves ultimately, we do really in our Hearts and by our Practice prefer our selves above God, as if we were more excellent and worthy: in which we cast infinite Contempt on the Lord of Glory, in as much as all the Nations are in his Sight but as a Drop of the Bucket and small Dust of the Ballance, and we compared with him are less than Nothing and Vanity. He is of infinite Majesty, Greatness, Glory & Excellency, and all Heaven adore him in the most humble Prostrations; and yet we, *mean* Worms of the Dust, yea *vile* Worms of the Dust, that deserve every Moment to be spurned to Hell; even *we* esteem and love our selves more than we do him, and are more concerned for our Interest than for his Honour; yea, care not at all for him or his Honour,

Honour, nor would ever so much as pretend to, if not excited thereto from the Expectation of Self-advantage: And that even altho' we receive Life and Breath and all Things from him, and his Right to us is original, underived, perfect and entire. Surely this is infinite Wickedness! And besides, in being and doing so, we affront his sacred Authority, whereby as Governour of the World he commands us to love him with all ourHearts.—— And further, while we are inclined to take our whole Delight in that which is not God, to forsake him the Fountain of living Waters, the Ocean of all Good, and seek Comfort andContent elsewhere; we hereby prefer the World above God, prefer our Wives and Children, our Houses and Lands and Pleasures above God, or at best we prefer (an imaginary) Heaven above God: to do either of which, casts infinite Contempt upon the Lord of Glory, the Delight of Angels, the Joy of the heavenly World. The *Psalmist* said, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is nothing onEarth I desire besides thee.* Psal. 73. 25. And well might he say so. But to be inclined, when we are secure in Sin and not terrified with Hell, to love and desire any Thing upon Earth more than God; and when under Terrors and fearful Expectations of Wrath, to desire Pardon, Peace, and (an imaginary) Heaven, and any Thing to make us happy, but God himself; is surely infinitely vile. We do hereby prefer that which is not God, above God himself; as if it was really of more Worth; and so cast infinite Contempt upon the Ocean of Blessedness and Fountain of all Good. And besides in this, as well as the former Particular, we go directly contrary to the express Command of the great Governour of the whole World. Finally, to be disposed to an inordinate (and so to a groundless) Self-love, and to be swallowed up in selfish Views and Designs, instead of a tender Love and cordial Benevolence to all our Fellow-Men, loving them as our selves, is evidently contrary to all the Reason and Nature of Things, and to the express Command of God, which is infinitely binding; and so this also is infinitely sinful. And thus these our native Propensities are directly contrary to the holy Law of God, and exceeding sinful.

But

But here it may be inquired: "If a Disposition to love "our selves supremely, live to our selves ultimately, and "to delight in that *which is not God* wholly, be so exceeding sinful, whence is it that Men's *Consciences* do not any "more *accuse* and *condemn* them therefor?" To which the *Answer* is plain and easy; *for this is evidently owing to their intolerable mean Thoughts of God.* Mal. 1. 6, 7, 8. *A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master: If then I be a Father, where is mine Honour? And if I be a Master, where is my Fear? saith the Lord of Hosts unto you, O Priests, that despise my Name: and ye say, Wherein have we despised thy Name? Ye offer polluted Bread upon mine Altar*; (and so ye despise me:) *and* (yet) *ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee?* (I answer) *In that* (in doing so) *ye* (practically) *say, The Table of the Lord is contemptible* (And so you treat me with Contempt.)——And yet their Consciences did not smite them, and therefore the Lord adds——*And if ye offer the Blind for Sacrifice, is it not Evil? and if ye offer the Lame and Sick, is it not Evil?* (or am I so mean and contemptible, that to do so ought not to be looked upon as an Affront? I appeal to the common Sense of Mankind,) *Offer it now unto thy Governour, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy Person? saith the Lord of Hosts.* (And if your Governour will take it as an Affront, much more may I) *for I am a GREAT KING, saith the LORD of Hosts, ℣.* 14. Here it is plain, that it was their mean and contemptuous Thoughts of God, which made them think it would do, to turn him off any how, and with any Thing. And just so it is in the Case before us; Men's Thoughts of God are infinitely mean; He is very contemptible in their Sight: and hence altho' they love themselves, their own Honour and Interest, above the Lord & his Glory, and prefer other Things, and take more delight in that which is not God, than in God himself; yet they say, "Wherein do we despise the "Lord, affront his Majesty, or cast Contempt upon him? "We pray in secret and in our Families, we go to Meeting and to Sacrament, and help to support the Gospel; "and is not all this to honour the Lord? And wherein "do we despise him?"—Just as if going into your Closet twice a Day to quiet your Conscience, and saying over the

old Prayer by Rote in your Family, that you have repeated Morning and Evening ever since you kept House; and in a customary Way going to Meeting and to Sacrament, and paying your Minister's Rate, (and it may be not without grudging;) just as if *this* was a *honouring* of God; when at Heart you do not love him one Jot, nor care for his Honour and Interest at all, nor would do any Thing in Religion but for the Influence of Education and common Custom, or from legal Fears and mercenary Hopes, or merely from some other selfish Consideration: yea, just as if this was an *honouring* of God, when all the Time you cast such infinite Contempt upon him in your Heart, as to give your Heart to *another*, to that which is not God, to your self and to the World!—Let a Woman treat her Husband so, will he be pleased with it, and will he accept her Person? If she does not love her Husband at all, or delight in his Person, or care for his Interest; if she loves another Man, has a separate Interest of her own, and does nothing for her Husband but to serve her own Ends: will he now think she is a *good Wife*, because Morning, Noon and Night, she prepares his Food, tho' she does it carelesly, the Victuals always cold and poorly dress'd, hardly fit to eat; and he knows it is all from want of Love: And besides, she thinks she does a *great deal* for him, and expects her *Pay* like a *hired Maid!*—And she says to her Husband, "Wherein do "I despise you? Am not I always doing for you?" And she does not feel her self to Blame, because her Husband looks so mean and contemptible in her Eyes: and she cares so little for him, that any Thing seems good enough for him: while all the time her whorish Heart is doating on her Lovers.—Says her Husband, "You do not love me, "but other Men have your Heart, and you are more a "*Wife* to them than to me."—But says she, "I can't love "you, and I can't but love others." And now she seems to her self not to blame. So a wicked World have such mean Thoughts of God, that they cannot love him at all, and have such high Thoughts of themselves, that they can't but love themselves supremely: they have such mean Thoughts of God, that they can't delight in him at all; but they see a Glory in other Things, and so in them they can't

can't but delight wholly: And because they are habitually insensible of God's infinite Glory, hence they are habitually insensible of the *exceeding Sinfulness* of these native Propensities of their Hearts. So that we see, that mean, contemptuous Thoughts of God are the very Foundation of the Peace and Quiet and Security of Men in a mere Form of Religion. If they did but see *who the Lord is*, they could not but judge themselves and all their Duties to be infinitely odious in his Sight. *Psal.* 50. 21, 22. *These Things hast thou done, and I kept Silence: thou thoughtest I was altogether such a one as thy self: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine Eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God.* Men have such mean Thoughts of God and so little regard him, that they are naturally inclined to *forget* that there is a God, and to feel and act as if there were none. Hence (*Psal.* 14.1.) *The Fool saith in his Heart, there is no God.* i. e. he is inclined to feel and act as if there was none. And therefore it is added in the next Words, *Corrupt are they.* So the Children of *Eli*, who treated the Worship of God with great Contempt, are said *to despise the Lord and kick at his Sacrifice*; and yet their Consciences did not smite them: and the Ground of all was *their mean contemptuous Thoughts of God.* 1 Sam. 2. 12,29,30. *The Sons of* Eli *were Sons of* Belial, *they knew not the Lord.* And thus we see that our native Disposition to love our selves supremely, live to our selves ultimately, and delight wholly in that which is not God, is (whether we are sensible of it, or no,) directly contrary to God's holy Law, and exceeding sinful.

And I add,

This native Bent of our Hearts *is the Root of all Sin*, (the *positive* Root, I mean, in opposition to a meer *privative* Cause) of all our inward Corruptions & vicious Practices; both of those which are contrary to the *first* and to the *second Table* of the Law, of those which more immediately affront God, and of those which more especially respect our Neighbour.

From this Root arises all our evil Carriage *towards the Lord of Glory*. This is the Root *of a Spirit of Self-supremacy*; whereby we in our Hearts exalt our selves and our Wills above the Lord and his Will, and refuse to be controuled

by him or be in Subjection unto him. Jehovah assumes the Character of most high God, supreme Lord and sovereign Governour of the whole World, and commands all the Earth to acknowledge and obey him as such; but we are all naturally inclined *Pharaoh-like* to say, *Who is the Lord, that we should obey him! we know not the Lord, nor will we do his Will.* And hence Mankind, all the World over, break God's Law, every Day, before his Face; as if they despised his Authority in their Hearts. And when he crosses them in his Providences, they, as tho' it was not his Right to govern the World, quarrel with him; because they can't have their *own Wills*, and go in their *own Ways*. This was always the Way of the Children of *Israel* those forty Years in the Wilderness, whose whole Conduct exemplifies our Nature to the Life, and in which Glass we may behold our Faces, and know what Manner of Persons we natively be. Men love themselves above God and don't like his Law, and hence are inclined to set up their Wills above and against his; and if they *can*, they *will*, have their Wills, and go in their Ways, for all him; and if they *can't*, they will quarrel with him. And hence the Apostle says, *The carnal Mind is Enmity against God, is not subject to his Law, neither indeed can be.* Rom. 8. 7.

And from this Root arises *a Spirit of Self-sufficiency and Independency*; whereby we are lifted up in our own Hearts, and hate to be beholden to God; and having different Interests and Ends from him, naturally think it not safe, and so upon the whole not liking, to trust in him, chuse to trust in our selves, or any Thing rather than him. We have a better Thought of our selves than of God, as knowing we are disposed to be true to our own Interests and Ends, and therefore had rather trust in our selves than in him; and besides, we naturally hate to come upon our Knees to him for every Thing. Hence, that in *Jer.* 2. 31. is the native Language of our Hearts, *We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee.* We love to have the Staff in our own Hands, for then we can do as we will; and hate to lie at God's Mercy, for then we must be at his Controul; yea, we had rather trust in any Thing than in God, he being of all Things most contrary to us. And hence the *Israelites*

lites in their Distress, would one while make a Covenant with *Assyria*, and then lean upon *Egypt*; yea, and rob the Treasures of the Temple to hire their Aid, rather than be beholden to God. Yea, they would make them Gods of Silver and Gold, of Wood and Stone, and then trust in such lying Vanities, rather than in the Lord Jehovah. *And as Face answers Face in the Water, so does the Heart of Man to Man*, Prov. 27. 19. This is our very Nature.

Again, from the same Root arises a *Disposition to depart from the Lord.* For other Things appear more glorious and excellent and Soul-satisfying than God. Wherefore the Hearts of the Children of Men secretly loath the Lord, and hanker after other Things, and so go away from God to them. Job 21. 12, 14. *They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the Sound of the Organ.——Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways.* Mal. 3. 14, 15. *It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it, that we have kept his Ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts? — We call the Proud happy.* Meditation and Prayer are a Burden to Men; they had rather be almost any where than in their Closets; because they secretly loath the Lord: but in other Things they find Comfort, one in his Farm and another in his Merchandise, the young Man in his Frolicks and with his merry Companions, the old Man in his Wife and Children, and Cattle and Swine, and House & Lands, the rich Man in his Riches, the ambitious Man in his Honours, the Scholar in his Books, the Man of Contemplation in his nice Speculations: and in any Thing Men can take more Comfort than in God himself. That which Angels and Saints in Heaven, and Believers on Earth, prize above all Things, Men have naturally the least Account of. Psal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is nothing on Earth I desire besides thee.* Jer. 2. 5, 11, 12, 13. *Thus saith the Lord, What Iniquity have your Fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after Vanity, and become vain? Hath a Nation changed their Gods, which are yet no Gods? But my People have changed their Glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this.—They have forsaken me the Fountain of*

living Waters, and hewed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no Water.

And from the whole, we may see there is the greatest Contrariety between the Nature of God and the Nature of the Sinner. And hence God hates Sinners, (*Hab.* 1. 13.) and Sinners hate him (*Rom.* 8. 7.) and when Sinners come to die and go into the eternal World, they will *feel* then that they hate him, tho' their Nature then will be just the same as it is now. And they will *then* know that the great Reason they did *not feel* their Hatred of him in this World, was because they did not *think* nor would *believe* that he was *such an One.*

And hence we may see whence it is, that we are so averse to right Apprehensions of God, and whence it is that our Insensibility of his Glory in being what he is, is so invincible, *viz.* because he is in his very Nature in such perfect Contrariety to us, and we to him. For to account that infinitely glorious in being what it is, which is of a Nature perfectly contrary to us, is as unnatural as to account our selves infinitely hateful in being what we be; for *that* necessarily implies *this.* So far therefore as Sinners love themselves for being what they be, so far do they hate God for being what he is: And so far as they hate God for being what he is, so far their Insensibility of his infinite Glory in being just such a one is invincible. And now since Men naturally perfectly love themselves for being what they be, and consequently perfectly hate God for being what he is; hence their Minds are naturally perfectly prejudiced against the true Knowledge of God, and perfectly averse to and insusceptive of a Sense of his infinite Glory in being just what he is. And hence it is, that neither God's Word nor Works, nor any thing but his almighty Spirit, can make Men in their Hearts, both really give into it, that God is just such a One as he is, and infinitely glorious in being such. The Heavens may declare the Glory of the Lord, and make the invisible Things of God clearly to be seen; and the Scriptures and Ministers may proclaim his Greatness and Glory, & the Honour of his Majesty; but Sinners in seeing will not see, and in hearing will not hear and understand: for they do not like to have God in their Knowledge. They hate the Light, and love Darkness; they hate to think that

God

God should be such a One, can see no Glory in him in being such, secretly wish he was another Kind of a Being, dread to think that he is what he is, and will not, if they can help it. *Joh.* 3. 19,20. *Rom.* 1. 28. *Joh.* 8. 43, 47. That God should love Himself more than he does his sinful Creatures, and value his own Honour and Interest more than he does our Happiness, and look upon it as an infinite Affront that we are not exactly of the same Mind, and judge us worthy of eternal Damnation therefor, and as high Governour of the World make such a Law and bind us to it to do so; how can this suit a proud Rebel, that only loves himself and his own Interest, and cares not for God at all? How can a carnal, selfish Heart delight in such a God, and account him infinitely glorious in being such? How can he rejoyce to hear that he sits King for ever, and does all Things according to the Counsel of his own Will, aiming ultimately at his own Glory? Or how can he imagine that such a Conduct, so directly cross to his Temper, is infinitely Right and becoming, glorious and excellent? The Temper, the *bad* Temper of Sinners Hearts is it, that renders their Insensibility of his Glory, in being what he is, so invincible. He does not suit them, he does not look upon Things as they do, he is not disposed nor does he act as they would have him, but all directly contrary: as contrary as Light and Darkness, as Sin and Holiness, as Heaven and Hell. Therefore *the carnal Mind is Enmity against God.* But to return,

From this same Root, this Disposition to love our selves supremely, live to our selves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, *proceeds all our evil Carriage towards our Neighbour.* Pride, Selfishness and Worldliness, lay the Foundation for all that cheating, lying, backbiting, quarrelling, there is among Neighbours; and for all the Feuds and bloody Wars there ever have been among all the Nations of the Earth from the beginning of the World. And Pride, Selfishness and Worldliness, together with that Enmity against God and true Religion which is naturally concomitant, lay the Foundation for all those bloody Persecutions, which have been in the several Ages of the World, against the Church and People of God. If Men were not

proud nor selfish, they would have no Inclination to injure their Neighbours in Name or Estate. If they took their supreme Delight in God as the Portion of their Souls, they would not have any of their little petty Idols to quarrel and contend about. If they loved their Neighbours as themselves, there would never more be any Thing like Persecution; and all Injuries and Abuses would cease from the Earth.— So that, to conclude, as a Disposition to love God with all our Hearts and our Neighbours as our selves, is an habitual Conformity to the whole Law, and lays a solid Foundation for a right Carriage towards God and our Neighbour in all Things; so a Disposition to love our selves supremely, live to our selves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, is an habitual Contrariety to the whole Law, and lays a sad Foundation for all evil Carriage towards God and our Fellow-Men. And as I said, this Disposition is natural to us, and we are naturally entirely under the Government of it: And so the Seed and Root of all Sin is in us, even in the native Temper of our Hearts. *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh.*

Obj. *But if Mankind neither love God nor their Neighbours with a genuine Love, such as the Law requires, but naturally have, and are entirely under the Government of, a Spirit of Contrariety to the whole Law; whence is it that all Men don't blaspheme God, and do all the Mischief they can, and in Practice as well as in Nature, be as bad as* Devils?

Ans. Because of the *Restraints*, which God for wise Ends and Purposes, is pleased to lay upon them; whereby their Nature is indeed not at all altered, but only in a Measure kept from breaking out, as otherwise it would do. And these Restraints, in ordinary, are such as arise from these Things. (1.) From their *animal Constitution:* whereby many are inclined to be tender-hearted, compassionate and kind, without any Regard to God or Duty, from a Sort of natural Instinct, much of the same Nature, to all Appearance, as is to be found in many in the brutal World.— (2.) From *natural Affection:* whereby, partly from animal Nature, and partly from Self-love, and from being brought up together, Relatives have a certain Fondness for one another, and so are disposed to be kind to one another, and that without

without any Regard to God or Duty; much as it is with many in the brutal World.—(3.) From a *good Education*; whereby many are influenced to be civil in their Behaviour, honest in their Dealings, kind to the Poor, and to pray in their Families, and join with the Church &c. tho' destitute of Grace in their Hearts.—(4.) From *worldly Considerations:* whereby, from Self-love, in order to avoid Punishment from Men, or from fear of Disgrace and Reproach, or to get the Good-will of others, or promote some worldly Interest, Men are influenced sometimes to carry themselves externally, very well.—(5.) From *religious Considerations:* whereby from Self-love, the Fear of Hell, and the Hope of Heaven, many are influenced to do much in Religion.—(6.) *Want* of *speculative Knowledge* of GOD; Ignorance of his Resolution to punish Sin, and of his Anger against them, is also an Occasion of their not blaspheming his Name; as they will do, as soon as ever they come into Eternity, and see how Things really be; tho' then their Nature will be exactly the same that now it is. God gives Rain and fruitful Seasons, and fills the Hearts of all with Food and Gladness; he makes his Sun rise and Rain fall upon the Evil and Unthankful, and offers Salvation in Case they repent and believe; whence Men are ready to think that God loves them, and this restrains them. These, and such like Things, restrain Men's Corruptions; but for which, they would be as bad in this World, as they will be in the next, when these Restraints come to be taken off.

To what has been said, may also be added, that God by these three Methods, does much to restrain many. (1.) *By his Providence:* Whereby he many Times brings remarkable Judgments upon Men for their Sins; and remarkably prospers Men, as to the Things of this World, who are true to their Word and honest in their Dealings. And hereby Men are afraid to be and do as bad as otherwise they would, lest some Judgment should come upon them; and others are influenced to be honest, and to carry themselves externally well, in hopes of a worldly Blessing.—— (2.) *By his Word*; his written Word, and his Word preached: whereby Men are made more sensible that there is a Heaven and a Hell; and so are the more

restrained

reſtrained and kept in Awe.—(3.) *By his Spirit:* whereby he does much to make many a Man ſenſible of the Evil of Sin, the Dreadfulneſs of Damnation, and the Glory of Heaven, whom he never ſanctifies: whereby they are not only reſtrained from vicious Practices, but their Corruptions alſo are greatly ſtunned, and they made zealous Promoters of Religion. (*Heb.* 6. 4.) And thus the ſupreme Governour of the World reſtrains Men's Corruptions, and maintains ſome Degree of Order among his rebellious Subjects.

But yet all theſe Reſtraints notwithſtanding, there is, and always has been, abundance of Wickedneſs committed in this apoſtate World. They have murthered God's Servants the Prophets, whom the Lord has ſent unto them, riſing early and ſending. And they have killed his Son, and his Apoſtles, and ſhed the Blood of Thouſands and Millions of his Saints. So great has been their Averſion to God! And ſo great their Cruelty! And by the many Wars there have been among the Nations from the Beginning, the whole Earth has been filled with Blood. And by cheating and lying and backbiting and Contention &c. *Hateful and hating one another*, innumerable Injuries have been done to, and unſpeakable Miſeries brought upon, one another. And as ſoon as ever Mankind have their Reſtraints taken off at Death, without having any Sin infuſed into their Nature, they will appear to be what they are, they will feel and act like very *Devils*.

But in the mean while, by Means of theſe Reſtraints many *deceive* themſelves. For our Corruptions, being thus capable of being reſtrained, and, as it were, ſtunn'd, and our Lives of being pretty well regulated to Appearance, while our Nature remains the ſame, and we feeling our ſelves able to do conſiderable towards this; hence many are deceived, and take this to be real Religion, and think they did, and that others may, convert themſelves, with but comparatively little Aſſiſtance from God's Spirit. And truly ſo they might, if this was true Religion, & Converſion conſiſted in thus reforming our Lives, and reſtraining our Corruptions. But in Converſion our very Nature muſt be changed, (2 *Cor.* 5. 17.) the native Bent of our Hearts muſt be turned; (*Ezek.* 36. 26.) and this we are naturally wholly averſe

averse unto. And hence arises the absolute Necessity of a supernatural, irresistible Grace, in order to our Conversion. Of which more afterwards.

But to return,

From what has been said we see, that we are natively disposed to love our selves supremely, to live to our selves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God, wholly: and that this Disposition, by which we are naturally entirely governed, in all Things and under all Circumstances, is in direct Contrariety to the holy Law of God, and is exceeding sinful, and is the Root of all Sin, of all our evil Carriage towards God and Man, in Heart and Life. So that, as to have a Disposition to love God with all our Hearts, and our Neighbour as our selves, is a radical Conformity to the whole Law; so this contrary Disposition is a radical Contrariety to the whole Law. Well therefore may the holy Scriptures speak of Sinners, as being *dead in Sin*, and *at Enmity against God*, and *by Nature Children of Wrath*, and represent them so frequently as being *Enemies to God.* (*Eph.* 2. 1, 3. *Rom.* 8. 7. and 5. 10. 2 *Cor.* 5. 18—20.) Since by comparing our selves with the holy Law of God, we are found to be, *in Fact*, natively so, in the Temper of our Minds. And it will be for ever in vain, for Mankind to plead *not guilty*, since the Law of God *is what it is*, and *we are what we be.* For by the Law *by which is the Knowledge of Sin*, we *evidently* stand condemned.

Here it may be *objected*, "That we are natively *no* "*otherwise than God makes us*; and if therefore we are "natively sinful, God made us so; and by Consequence "is the *Author of Sin.*" But this *Objection* has been already obviated. For, as has been observed, God only creates the naked Essence of our Souls, our natural Faculties, a Power to think and will and to love and hate; and this *evil Bent* of our Hearts *is not of his making*, but is the *spontaneous Propensity* of our *own Wills.* For we, being born devoid of the divine Image, ignorant of God, and insensible of his infinite Glory, do of *our own Accord* turn to our selves and the Things of Time and Sense, and to any Thing that suits a graceless Heart, and there all our Affections center; from whence we natively become averse to God

God and to all that which is ſpiritually Good, and inclined to all Sin. So that the *poſitive* Corruption of our Nature is not any Thing created by God; but ariſes *merely* from a *privative* Cauſe.

Here it will be *objected* again, "That it is not conſiſtent "with the divine Perfections, to bring Mankind into the "World under ſuch ſad and unhappy Circumſtances."— *But who art thou, O Man, that replieſt againſt God? Shall the Thing formed ſay unto him that formed it, Why haſt thou formed me thus?* It is blaſphemous, to ſay, that it is not conſiſtent with the divine Perfections to do, what God IN FACT does. It is a plain *Matter of Fact*, that we are born into the World devoid of the divine Image, ignorant of God, inſenſible of his infinite Glory. And it is a plain *Matter of Fact*, that in Conſequence hereof we are natively diſpoſed to love our ſelves ſupremely, live to our ſelves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God, wholly. And it is plain to a Demonſtration, that this Temper is in direct Contrariety to God's holy Law, is exceeding ſinful, and is the Root of all Wickedneſs. *Now*, to ſay, it is not conſiſtent with the divine Perfections, that Mankind ſhould be brought into the World, as in FACT they be, is wickedly to fly in the Face of our almighty Creator, and expreſsly charge him with Unrighteouſneſs; which, ſurely does not become us. If we cannot ſee into this Diſpenſation of divine Providence, yet we ought to remember, that God is *holy in all his Ways, and righteous in all his Works*, and that *the Judge of all the Earth always does right*. I don't mean, that Things are *therefore* right, *merely* becauſe God does them; for if they were not right to be done, antecedently to his doing of them, he would not, he could not do them. But I mean, that when it is *a plain Matter of Fact* that God does ſuch a Thing, we may thence conclude that it is moſt certainly right for him to do ſo, altho' we cannot underſtand *how* it is. We ought to remember that he is infinite in his Underſtanding, and at one comprehenſive View beholds all Things, and ſo cannot but know what is right and what is wrong in all Caſes: and his Judgment is unbiaſſed, the Rectitude of his Nature is perfect, he cannot therefore but do right always, and in all Inſtances

govern

govern the World in Righteousness. But our Minds are narrow and contracted, we are but of Yesterday and know Nothing: and besides, our Judgments are biassed thro' our mean Thoughts of God and high Thoughts of our selves; and hence we may be easily mistaken. Especially in this Case, our Minds are sadly biassed, and it is almost impossible for us to consider the Matter with a Spirit of disinterested Impartiality. And these Considerations ought to check our rising Thoughts, and make us lie down in the Dust before the great and righteous and good Governour of the World, with humble Silence, even altho' we cannot understand his Ways. And I believe that a humble Disposition of Heart would lay an effectual Foundation, for us to come to be satisfyed in this Matter: it being our mean Thoughts of God and high Thoughts of our selves, which blinds our our Minds, that we cannot see; and disposes us to quarrel with our Creator, and find fault with the Ruler and Disposer of the World.—— It is true, that the holy Scriptures consider Mankind as being what they be, and says but little about the Way in which they came to be in such a Condition. And there is good Reason for it; for it is of infinitely greater Importance that we should know what a Condition we are in, than how we came into it. And it is a foolish Thing for us, and contrary to common Sense, to lay the Blame any where but upon our selves, since we are *voluntarily* such as we be, and really *love* to be what we be, do not sincerely desire to be otherwise, but are utterly averse to it.—— But yet the holy Scriptures say so much about the Way of our coming into our present Condition, as might fully satisfy our Minds, were not our Judgments biassed. For from them we learn, that *Man was made upright, was created in God's Image*, and by *rebelling against his Maker brought a Curse upon himself and all his Race. Gen.* 1. 27. *Eccl.* 7. 29. *Rom.* 5. 12—19. *There* we read, that *by one Man, Sin entered into the World; that by one Man's Disobedience, many were made Sinners; that by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation. Adam* was created in the Image of God, it was connatural to him to love God with all his Heart, and this would have been our Case, had he not rebelled against God; but now we are

born

born devoid of the divine Image, have no Heart for God, are Transgressors from the Womb, *by nature Children of Wrath.*

And if any should inquire, "But can it be right, that "*Adam*'s Sin should have any Influence upon us?"

I *Answer*, It is a plain Case, that it *actually* has, and we may depend upon it, that the Judge of all the Earth always does right. And besides, why might not God make *Adam* our publick Head and Representative to act in our Room, as he has since for our Recovery made his *own Son* our publick Head and Representative? *Rom.* 5. 12—21. He had as much *Right*, *Power* and *Authority* for one, as for the other. And was not *Adam* as likely to remain obedient, as any of us should have been, and in some Respects more likely? His natural Powers were ripe; he stood not only for himself, but for all his Race; a whole World lay at Stake. And if he had kept the Covenant of his God, and secured Happiness to all his Race, should we not for ever have blessed God, for so good a Constitution? Never once should we have questioned God's *Right* and *Authority* to make him our publick Head and Representative, or have thought that it did not become his Wisdom & Goodness to trust our All in his Hands. And if we should thus have approved this Constitution, had *Adam* never sinned; why might we not as justly approve it now, if we would be but disinterestedly impartial? It is the same in it self *now*, that it would have been *then*, every way as holy, just and good.—"Oh but for God to damn a whole World for "one Sin!"—But stay;—Does not this arise from mean Thoughts of God, and high Thoughts of your self? O, think who the Lord is! And what it is for a Worm to rise in Rebellion against him! And how he treated whole Thousands of *glorious Angels* for their first Sin! And then, think how God drowned the *old World*, burnt *Sodom*; and of the dreadful Things he intends to do to the Impenitent at the Day of Judgment! And learn, and believe, that Sin is an infinitely greater Evil than we naturally imagine.

But I must return to my Subject, for it is not my present Business so much to shew, *how we came into this Condition*, as plainly to point out *what that Condition is*, *which we are actually in.* As to this, the whole Scriptures are very plain, but

but especially the *Law*, *by which is the Knowledge of Sin*, clearly discovers what our Case is, and beyond Dispute proves, that *all are under Sin.* And having already, by comparing our selves with the Law, found out what our Nature is, I proceed to make some further Observations; in which I design much greater Brevity.

4. From what has been said, we may learn, *that the very best religious Performances of all unregenerate Man are*, complexly considered, *sinful, and so odious in the Sight of God.* They may do many Things *materially Good*, but the *Principle*, *End* and *Manner* of them are such, as that, *complexly considered*, what they do is *Sin* in the Sight of God. For *Sin is a Transgression of the Law.*——— But,

(1.) The Law requires all Mankind to do every Duty out of Love to God and for his Glory: But all unregenerate Persons, *directly contrary to Law*, do every Duty merely out of Love to themselves and for Self-Ends: And so *are guilty of Rebellion.*

(2.) The Law requires all Mankind to do every Duty out of Love to God and for his Glory: But all unregenerate Persons do every Duty merely out of Love to themselves and for Self-Ends; whereby they *prefer themselves* and *their Interest*, *above God* and *his Glory:* And so *are guilty of spiritual Idolatry.*

(3.) The Law requires all Mankind to do every Duty from Love to God and for his Glory: But all unregenerate Persons do every Duty merely from Self-Love and for Self-Ends; and yet *hypocritically pretend* to God, that they *love* and *obey him:* And so *are guilty of mocking God.*

(4.) The Law supposes that God *infinitely deserves* to be loved with all our Hearts and obeyed in every Thing, and that our Neighbour *deserves* to be loved as our selves; and that therefore if we should yield perfect Obedience in all Things, yet we should *deserve no Thanks:* But all unregenerate Persons make *MUCH* of their Duties, tho' such miserable poor Things: And so *affront God to his very Face.*

Upon these *four Accounts*, their very best Performances are done in a Manner directly contrary to the Law of God, and so are sinful, and therefore odious in the Sight of God. (*Prov.* 15.8. & 21. 27. *Rom.* 8. 8. *Psal.* 88. 36,37.)

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As is the Tree, so is the Fruit; as is the Fountain, so are the Streams; And as is the Man, so are his Doings, in the Sight of God, who looks at the Heart (*Matt.* 12. 33, 34, 35.) and judges not according to Appearance, but judges righteous Judgment: And, with whom, many Things, that are highly esteemed among Men, are Abomination.

And if their best religious Performances are thus odious in the Sight of God, it is certain that they cannot possibly, in the Nature of Things, have the least Tendency to make Amends for their past Sins, or recommend them to the divine Favour; but rather tend to provoke God still more. So that *it is not of him that Wills, nor of him that Runs, but of God that shews Mercy.* Nor is there the least Hope in the Sinner's Case, but what arises from the sovereign Mercy of God; whereby he can *have Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and have Compassion on whom he will have Compassion.* Rom. 9. 15, 18.

True, some being ignorant of the Law, and of our entire Contrariety to it, have fancied a Goodness in the Sinner's Duties; and hence have perswaded themselves that there are Promises of special Grace made to them.—— Not that there are any Promises in Scripture, of that Nature; for the Scripture every where considers us as being, while unregenerate, *dead in Sin.* Eph. 2. 1. *Enemies to God.* Rom. 5. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 17—20. Col. 1. 21. Yea, *Enmity against him.* Rom. 8. 7. And so far from any true and acceptable Obedience to God, as that we *are not*, nor *can be* subject to the Law, and so *cannot please God.* Rom. 8. 7, 8. And every where represents such, as being under *the Wrath of God*, the *Curse of the Law*, and *a present Condemnation.* Joh. 3. 18, 36. Rom. 1. 18. Gal. 3. 10.—But the real Ground of their Opinion is, their Ignorance of the Sinner's sinful, guilty Circumstances, and their fond Conceit that there is some real Goodness in what the Sinner does. Both which, are owing to their Ignorance of the Law, * and of the Nature of true Holiness. *Rom.*

* 'Tis manifest, that this Notion of the Promises, of which *Pelagius* was the Author, and which was condemned for Heresy above 1300 Years ago, did with him, and does with his Followers, take its Rise originally from their Ignorance of the Nature and Meaning of the moral Law.

But

Rom. 7. 8, 9. *Rom.* 10. 3. All will own, that if Sinners Duties, are such as I have represented, it is absurd, and even inconsistent with the divine Perfections, that Promises of special Grace, should be made to them.

'Tis true, they refer to Matt. 25. 29. *To him that hath, shall be given.* But that Text evidently speaks of the final Rewards which shall be given to the Godly at the Day of Judgment; when all the Unregenerate shall, with *the slothful Servant, be cast into outer Darkness.*——— They quote also Matt. 7. 7. *Ask and you shall receive,* &c. But the Condition of this Promise was never yet performed by an unregenerate Sinner. For this *asking* is meant *right asking,* for those who *ask amiss* receive nothing. *Jam.* 4. 3. *Right asking* of Grace, supposes *right Desires* of it; but the unregenerate are in the habitual Temper of their Hearts directly contrary to Grace and all spiritual Good, and entirely so, as has been proved. But to have *genuine Desires* after a Thing, and a *perfect Contrariety* to it, in the whole Heart, at the same Time, is an express Contradiction. The Reason that Sinners many Times *think* that they *love* Holiness, and *desire heartily and sincerely* to be *made* holy, is, that they, being ignorant of the Nature of true Holiness, have framed a *false Image* of it in their own Fancies. Did they but distinctly know, *the very Thing itself,* their native Contrariety to it could no longer be hid. *Rom.* 7. 8, 9. So the *Pharisees* thought they loved God, and loved his Law; altho' at the same Time they perfectly hated the Son of God, who was the express Image of his Father, and came into the World to do Honour to his Father's Law. They had wrong Notions of God and of his Law.

Obj. *But this tends to drive Sinners to Despair.*

Answ. Only to despair of being saved by their own Righteousness, which they must be driven to, or they will never submit to be saved by free Grace thro' Jesus Christ. *Rom.* 7. 8, 9. *and* 10. 3. Obj.

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But yet some good Men may have been inadvertently led into this Error by the Force of Education. I believe Men's Hearts may be sometimes better than their Heads. But when a false Scheme of Religion does perfectly suit a Man's Heart, and express the Temper of his Mind, then no Doubt he is graceless. 2 *Joh.* 9. & *Joh.* 8. 47. The above Notion of the Promises perfectly suits a self-righteous Heart.

Obj. *But if these Things be true, there is not any Motive to excite a poor Sinner to reform, or pray, or read, or do any Thing.*

Answ. By which, it is plain, that a Sinner cares not a Jot for God, and will not go one Step in Religion, only for what he can get. And if such a Sinner had ever so many Motives, he would only serve himself, but not serve God at all. And what Encouragement can God, consistent with his Honour, give to such a one, since he merits Hell every Moment, even by his best Duties, but only that which St. *Peter* gave to *Simon Magus?* Act. 8. 22. *Repent, and pray to God, if PERADVENTURE the* Wickedness *of thy Heart may be forgiven thee.*

Obj. *But this way of Reasoning will make Sinners leave off seeking and striving, and sit down discouraged.*

Answ. Not if Sinners are but effectually awakened to see how dreadful Damnation is; for a bare, *Who can tell?* will make such resolve to run, and fight, and strive, and beg, and pray 'till they die; and if they perish, to perish at God's Foot. And as for others, all their Courage arises from their not seeing what wretched, miserable, sinful, guilty Creatures they are; and so must be dash'd to Pieces sooner or later, in this World or the next, whenever their Eyes come to be opened. And if God ever in this World shews them what they be, they will thereby perceive what Danger they are in: And *now* a mere *who can tell?* will make them also resolve to run for eternal Salvation, 'till their very last Breath. 'Tis best that false Confidence should be killed, and this Way of Reasoning does not in the least tend to hurt any other. 'Tis best that Sinners should know the worst of their Case, and this Way of Reasoning does not tend to make it appear a Jot worse than it is.

Obj. *But what Good does it do, for Sinners to be in such earnest to reform, read, watch, pray, run, fight, strive, as for for their Lives; since all they do is Sin, and God will have Mercy, only on whom he will have Mercy.*

Answ. (1.) It is less Sin to do these Things, than not to do them.

(2.) Sinners never will be in such earnest, only when God comes to awaken and convince, and so to make them effectually sensible of the dreadful State they are in; and it

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is not any Discouragements that can keep them from being in such earnest *then*, so long as the least Hope appears in their Case. Other People care but little about eternal Things, and do but very little in Religion, but what Education, Custom, the Fashion and their worldly Interest excites them unto. Most People think it so easy a Thing to be saved, as that they look upon such great Concern and Earnestness, as perfect Frenzy.

(3.) This great Earnestness of awakened Sinners makes them try their Strength to Purpose; whereby they come to be experimentally convinced, that it is not in their Hearts to love God, be sorry for Sin, or do any Thing that is Good; whereby the high Conceit they used to have of their Ability and good Nature is brought down, and they feel and find that they are Enemies to God and dead in Sin. And hereby a Foundation is laid for them to see the Justice of God in their Damnation, and so the Reasonableness of God's having Mercy, only on whom he will have Mercy. And thus the Law, tho' it *cannot give Life*, yet is a *School-master to bring Men to Christ*. And thus the main Good the awakened Sinner gets, by going to this *School-master*, is effectually to learn his Need of Christ, and of the free Grace of God thro' him. *Rom.* 7. 8, 9. *Gal.* 3. 21—24. This is the great End God has in View, and this End all the Sinner's earnest Strivings are well calculated to obtain.

5. From what has been said, we may learn *the Nature of a saving Conversion, and the Manner wherein it is wrought.* Conversion consists in our being recovered, from our present Sinfulness, to the moral Image of God: Or which is the same Thing, to a real Conformity to the moral Law. But a Conformity to the moral Law, consists in a Disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively; and to love our Neighbour as our selves: and a Practice agreable thereto. And therefore Conversion consists in our being recovered from what we are by Nature, to such a Disposition and Practice.

And now in order to such a glorious Renovation and Recovery, God by his Spirit sets home the Law upon the Sinner's Heart, causing him to see and feel, to Purpose, just how he has lived, and what he is, and what he deserves,

and how he is in the Hands of a sovereign God, and at his Disposal: whereby the Hindrances which were in the Way of his Conversion, are in a Sort removed. Rom. 7. 8, 9. *For without the Law Sin was dead. For I was alive without the Law once: but when the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died.*— And then God *who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, shines in the Heart, and gives the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. 4. 6. And now a Sense of the Glory of God and divine Things being thus imparted to the Soul by the Spirit of God, and the Sinner being raised up from spiritual Death to spiritual Life, does return home to God thro' Jesus Christ, venturing his Soul and immortal Concerns upon the free Grace of God, and thro' him gives up himself to God to be his for ever; to love him supremely, live to him intirely, and delight in him superlatively, and for ever to walk in all his Ways. And hereby at the same Time the Man's Heart begins to be habitually framed to love his Neighbour as himself, with a disinterested Impartiality. And thus an effectual Foundation is laid, for universal external Obedience, and that from genuine Principles.

And as the divine Life is thus begun, so it is carried on in the Soul much after the same Manner. The Spirit of God shews the Believer more and more what a poor, sinful, Hell-deserving Wretch he is in himself, and so makes him more and more sensible of his absolute Need of free Grace thro' Jesus Christ, to pardon & to sanctify him. He grows in a Sense of these Things all his Days; whereby his Heart is kept humble, and Christ and free Grace made more precious. The Spirit of God shews the Believer more & more of the infinite Glory and Excellency of God, whereby he is more and more influenced to love him, live to him, and delight in him, with all his Heart. And by the whole, his Heart is framed more and more to love his Neighbour as himself. And thus *the Path of the Just is like a shining Light, that shines more and more, to the perfect Day.* Prov. 4. 18. Only, it must be observed, that the Spirit's Operations after Conversion, are attended with two Differences, arising from two Causes.—— (1.) From the *different State* of the Subject wrought upon. The Believer not being under the Law

Law as a Covenant, is not by the Spirit filled with those legal Terrors arising from the Fears of Hell, as heretofore he was. *Rom.* 8. 15. But only is made sensible of his remaining Sinfulness, and the Sinfulness and Desert of Sin, and of God's fatherly Displeasure. And hereby his Heart is humbled and broken. Indeed hereby he is many Times filled with unspeakable Anguish and Bitterness of Soul. *His Sins are ever before his Eyes, and his Bones wax old thro' his roaring all the Day long. Psal.* 23. 3. and 51. 3. *He is troubled, he is bowed down greatly, he goes mourning all the Day long.* Psal. 38. 1—6. But these awakening, convincing, humbling, mourning, purifying Times always end in Peace and Joy and Rest in God; attended with a greater Degree of Tenderness of Conscience and holy Watchfulness, and followed with bringing forth more Fruit. *Psal.* 97. 11. and 126. 5, 6. *Psal.* 32. 5. and 73. 25—28. *Joh.* 15. 2. 2 *Cor.* 7. 10, 11. *Heb.* 12. 11. *Hos.* 2. 6, 7, 14, 15.——

(2.) From the *different Nature* of the Subject wrought upon. The Believer not being under the full Power of Sin and at perfect Enmity against God, as once he was, hence does not resist the Spirit with the whole Heart, while he takes down the Power of Sin, as heretofore he did; but has a genuine Disposition to join in on God's Side, and say, "Let me be effectually weaned from the World, and humbled, and made holy and heavenly, and be brought into "an entire Subjection to God in all Things, tho' by Means "and Methods ever so cross to Flesh and Blood. Let me "be stript naked of all worldly Comforts, and let *Shimei* "curse, and all outward Evils and inward Anguish of "Heart come upon me, if nothing else will do. Here "Lord, I be in thy Hands, chasten, correct, do what thou "wilt with me; only let Sin die: Sin thine Enemy, the "worst Evil, and the greatest Burthen of *my* Soul." *Rom.* 7. 24. 2 *Cor.* 4. 8, 9, 16. *Jam.* 1. 2. *Psal.* 119. 71. *Heb.* 12. 9. And he is not only thus willing that God should by any Methods take down the Power of Sin in his Heart, but also joins in with the Methods of divine Grace, and by watching and praying, and by fighting and striving, seeks the Death of every Corruption. And from his thus joining in on God's Side against the *Flesh*, he is said in Scripture *to crucify it.* Gal.

Gal. 5. 24. And *to work out his own Salvation.* Phil. 2. 13.

From what has been said under this Head, we may see that a saving Conversion differs very much from the Conversion of these *four* Sorts of Men.—— (1.) *The worldly Hypocrite.* Who makes a Profession of Religion, does many Things, appears zealous, and pretends to be a good Man, merely from worldly Considerations, and to be seen of Men. *Mat.* 23. 5.—— (2.) *The legal Hypocrite.* Whose Conversion is nothing else, but a leaving off his vicious Practices, and turning to be strict and conscientious in external Duties, in Hopes thereby to make Amends for his past Sins, and recommend himself to God; and so escape Hell and get to Heaven. *Rom.* 10. 3.—— (3.) *The evangelical Hypocrite.* Whose Conversion was nothing else but this, he was awakened to see his Sins, and terrified with Fear of Hell, and humbled in a Measure, but not thoro'ly, but great Light broke into his Mind, and now he believes that Christ loves him, and has pardoned all his Sins, and so is filled with Joy and Zeal, and is become quite another Man: But still has no Grace. *Mat.* 13. 20. *Heb.* 6. 4. 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. These usually either fall away to carnal Security, or being puft up with Pride turn Enthusiasts.—— (4.) *The wild, blazing Enthusiast.* Whose Conversion all arises *from imaginary Notions.* He has an imaginary Sight of his Sin, his Heart, the Wrath of God, of Hell and the Devil, and is terribly distressed: And then he sees Christ in a bodily Shape, it may be on the Cross with his Blood running, or seated on a Throne of Glory at his Father's right Hand, he sees a great Light shining all round him, hears the Angels sing, sees Visions, hears Voices, has Revelations, and thinks himself one of the very best Saints in the whole World, tho' in Truth he, by scandalous Practices, or heretical Principles, or both, soon appears to be seven Times more a Child of the Devil than he was before. However, in his own Conceit, he knows infallibly that he is right, and all the World can't convince him to the contrary. Yea he is fit at once to be a Minister, tho' ignorant of the first Principles of Religion; he is inspired by God, and whoever likes him not is an Enemy to Jesus Christ, he doubts

doubts not at all. These are the Tares the Devil sows, by Means of whom the Ways of God are evil spoken of. *Mat.* 13. 39. 2 *Cor.* 11. 14. 1 *Tim.* 1. 7.

Now these several Sorts of Religion, the true and the false, growing up from these several Roots, do all receive a different Nourishment, according to their different Nature; thro' which Nourishment, they grow and increase; and thro' the want of which they decay. *The good Man*, the greater Sense he has of God's infinite Glory, as he has revealed himself in the Law and in the Gospel, so proportionably does his Religion flourish and grow in all it's various Branches, and shine with a heavenly Lustre. *The worldly Hypocrite* lays out himself most in Religion, when there are the most to observe and applaud him. *The legal Hypocrite*, when his Conscience is most terrified, with the Thoughts of Death; Judgment & Eternity. And *the evangelical Hypocrite* has his Affections raised, his Love and Joy and Zeal, in Proportion to his supposed Discoveries of the Love of Christ to him in particular, and Sense of the Glories of (a fancied) Heaven. And finally, *the blazing Enthusiast* is more or less lively in Religion according as he has Dreams, hears Voices, has Impressions and Revelations, and is applauded by his Party.——And accordingly those different Sorts of Religion, will grow and thrive the best, under such different Sorts of Preaching, as suits their several Natures: And Men will cry up those Ministers most, whose Preaching and Conduct agree with their Hearts the best. *Mic.* 4. 5. *For all People will walk, every one in the Name of his God.* And true Believers *will walk in the Name of the LORD their GOD.*——

6. From all that has been said, we may learn that a Sinner is *naturally disposed to resist the Spirit of God, with all his Might*, when he comes to awaken, convince and humble him, to take down the Power of Sin in his Heart, and turn him to God. Conversion consists in our being recovered from the sinful State we are in by Nature, to a real Conformity to the divine Law. i. e. in our being recovered from a Disposition to love our selves supremely, live to our selves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, and a Practice agreeable to this Disposition——; To

a Disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, and to love our Neighbours as our selves, and a Practice agreeable thereto. i. e. In other Words, in our being recovered from one Disposition, to another directly contrary to it; even so contrary, that the first must die, in order to the others Existence. This Disposition from which we are to be recovered, is not any Habit contracted merely by Custom, which might more easily be parted with; but it is connatural to us, a Disposition rooted as it were in our very Nature, and which has the full Possession of our Souls, and the entire Government of our Hearts: In a Word, a Disposition, which we in every Respect perfectly love, and which we perfectly hate should be ever cross'd, & which yet must be slain or we never converted. Now if ever a Sinner be recovered from this Disposition, 'tis evident it must be against the very Grain of his Heart: his Heart therefore will make the utmost Resistance, it possibly can.

If we were entirely renewed in an Instant, without any *previous* Strivings of the Spirit, then indeed there would be no Room nor Time for Resistance: but otherwise the Heart will resist. If there were the least Disposition in our Hearts, contrary to our natural Disposition to love our selves supremely, live to our selves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, it might join in on God's Side, be sincerely desirous that God would slay the Enmity of our Hearts; but there is not. The carnal Mind is wholly Enmity against God, is not subject to his Law, nor can be; and so the whole Heart will make Resistance. If the Disposition to which we are recovered in Conversion, were not so directly contrary to our natural Disposition, as that our natural Disposition must be slain, in order to the very being of that, the Sinner's Opposition might not be so great; but when all that is within him is directly crossed and going to be killed, all that is within him will oppose and resist, 'till slain. We are by Nature wholly *in the Flesh* and *after the Flesh*; according to *Scripture*-Phrase, *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh:* and by Conversion we are to become *Spirit*; *That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.* But the *Flesh* and the *Spirit* are in *Scripture* represented

sented as being *contrary the one to the other*. Will *Flesh* then of it's own Accord become *Spirit?* No surely. For the *Flesh lusteth against the Spirit*. i. e. Is wholly averse to it, and set against it. So that there is no other Way, but, according to *Scripture*-Phrase, the *Flesh must be crucified*, with the Affections & Lusts. But the *Flesh perfectly hates* this Death, and therefore will *resist with all it's Might*. *Rom.* 8. 7, 8. *Joh.* 3. 6. *Gal.* 5. 17. *Rom.* 6. 6.

As the Truth of this Point is thus evident from the Reason and Nature of Things, so it is farther confirmed from constant Experience. For let any Man read the *Bible* with Attention, and he may plainly see, that the very Thing, which God has always been driving at, in all the external Means, he has used with his professing People, in every Age of the World, has been *to recover them to a Conformity to his holy Law in Heart and Life*. i. e. To recover them from a Disposition to love themselves supremely, live to themselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, and a Practice agreeable thereunto; To a Disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, and to love their Neighbours as themselves, and to practise accordingly: *For on these two Commands hang all the Law and the Prophets*. And we may also plainly see, that God's professing People have always manifested the greatest Aversion to hearken to the *Law* and to the *Prophets*; and so to die to themselves, the World and Sin; and thus to give up themselves to God to love him, live to him, delight in him, and walk in all his Ways. God sent all his Servants, the *Prophets*, to the Children of *Israel*, rising early and sending; but they always hated their Words, and so stopped their Ears, and refused to obey: Yea, they fell into a Rage at them, and in their Rage, they mocked them, they scourged them, they bound them, they imprisoned them, they stoned them, they sawed them asunder, and made the rest wander about in Deserts and Mountains, and in Dens and Caves of the Earth, in Sheep-Skins and Goat-Skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented. *Heb.* 11. 35—38. And when God sent his well-beloved Son to call a wicked World to return home unto to him, they said, *Come, let us kill him*. Mat. 21. 33—39.

And

And when *Christ* sent his *Apostles* to carry the glad Tidings of Pardon and Peace to the Ends of the Earth, and call all Men to repent and be converted, to return and love and serve the living God, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* conspired together against them, and killed them; just as the *ten Tribes* killed the Messenger, whom *Rehoboam* sent unto them, to call and invite them to return to their former Allegiance. 1 *Kin.* 12. 18. Therefore says our blessed Saviour to the *Jews* who pretended great Love to God & to the Law, and mightily to honour their Prophets, *You are like whited Sepulchres, you appear outwardly righteous, but inwardly are full of all Hypocrisy & Wickedness. Your Fathers ki'led the Prophets, whom you pretend to Honour, but you are full as bad as they were. Ye Serpents, ye Generation of Vipers,* &c. *Wherefore, behold, I send unto you Prophets and wise Men and Scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your Synagogues, and persecute them from City to City.—— O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee! How often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as the Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye WOULD NOT!* Mat. 23, 27—37. From all which, nothing can be plainer, than that this rebellious God-hating World always have been set against a Return to God, and been disposed to do all they could, to render all Means ineffectual. Well might St. *Stephen* therefore, say unto the *Jews*, as he did, in *Acts*, 7. 51. *Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in Heart and Ears, ye do always resist the holy Ghost: as your Fathers did, so do ye:* Nor had they any Reason to be angry with him therefor.

And as all, who have enjoyed the external Means of Grace, have thus been disposed to hate the Light, shut their Eyes, stop their Ears and refuse to hear, and been utterly averse to a return to God; so this is evidently the Case with all whom God has inwardly wrought upon by his Spirit; as all know, who have either had any Experience themselves, or have candidly observed the Experience of others. And indeed it must be so; for the very same Temper, which will make Men resist the *outward*, will also dispose them to resist the *inward* Means of Grace. For the *holy*

Spirit

Spirit teaches and urges the very same Things, that *Moses* and the *Prophets*, and *Christ* and his *Apostles* teach and urge, and drives at the same End; and will therefore of Consequence meet with the same Opposition and Resistance, from the very same Quarter. *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World; and Men love Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds are Evil. He that doth Evil, hateth the Light.* Joh. 3. 19, 20. That Light which will discover Men's evil Deeds, and shew them their fallen, sinful, guilty, helpless undone Condition; and so spoil all their worldly, carnal Comforts, the very Idols of their Hearts; and also kill their legal Self-righteous Hopes; which is all the awaken'd and concerned Sinner has, to his own Sense and Apprehension, to depend upon; that Light which effects Things, which are so directly cross to the inward Temper of the Sinner's Heart, he will naturally be disposed to hate, shut his Eyes against, flee from and resist with all his Might; and that whether it comes from the *external* Teachings of the Word, or *internal* Teachings of the Spirit. Yea, so long as there is the least remainder of Corruption left in Believers themselves, it will hate to die, and struggle with all it's Might to keep it's Ground, yea, and to recover it's former Dominion. *Rom.* 7. 23. *I see another Law in my Members, warring against the Law in my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in my Members.* Yea, it implies a Contradiction, to suppose, Corruption can in any Case be willing to die: for every Temper in our Hearts *naturally* loves to be gratified and pleased, and it is a Contradiction, to suppose, it can at the same Time be willing to be cross'd and killed. *Gal.* 5. 17.

Obj. *But do not awakened Sinners earnestly desire to repent of and be humbled for their Sins, and to mortify their Corruptions, and to give up themselves to God, to love and live to him; and do they not earnestly pray for the divine Spirit to assist them so to do? How can they then be disposed at the same Time to make such mighty Resistance?*

Answ. (1.) Awakened Sinners see themselves in great Danger, and they therefore earnestly desire and seek after Self-Preservation, and this is plainly owing to Nature, and not to any Grace or Goodness in their Hearts. Psal. 66. 3.

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Thro' the Greatneſs of thy Power thine Enemies ſubmit themſelves unto thee. i. e. they feign a Submiſſion, but they are thine Enemies. (2.) That which moves them to deſire to repent, be humbled, &c. is, they hope by theſe Means to make Amends for their paſt Sins, and ingratiate themſelves into the Favour of God. *Rom.* 10. 3. i. e. merely from Self-love, with pure Hypocriſy, they would impoſe upon God. For (3.) After all their Pretences, Deſires and Prayers, their Nature and Temper is juſt what it uſed to be: and were they but delivered from the Fears of Hell, and left at full Liberty to follow their own Inclinations, they would live as viciouſly as ever they did. (4.) Yet they pretend to love God and would fain have him believe them ſincere, and are ready to expect Acceptance for what they do, and to think it hard if God ſhould not accept them. Now if it was the Work of the Spirit of God, to build up ſuch a Sinner in this hypocritical, Self-righteous way, he might be diſpoſed, while under his Fears and Terrors, to concur and fall in with the Spirit's Influence: and all merely from Self-love and for Self-Ends. But if the Spirit of God goes about to bring home the Law in its Strictneſs, and ſhew ſuch a Sinner the very Truth, that he does not love God nor deſire to, that his Deſires and Prayers and Tears are all hypocritical, that he is ſtill dead in Sin and an Enemy to God, that he deſerves to be damned as much as ever he did; that God is at Liberty, all his Duties notwithſtanding, to reject him; that he lies abſolutely at God's Mercy: Now he will hate the Light, ſhut his Eyes againſt it, quarrel at it, and reſiſt it with all his Might. It is exceeding hard for the poor Sinner, when he begins to be awakened, to part with a vain Life, and vain Companions, his carnal Eaſe and Comfort, and all vicious Courſes, to make Reſtitution to thoſe he has wronged in Name or Eſtate, and give himſelf to Reading, Meditation & Prayer, and to a ſerious mortifying Way of living: he can't bear the Thoughts, would fain contrive an eaſier Way, or elſe delay for the preſent ſo mournful and tedious a Work. But when, by the dreadful Fears of Hell and eternal Damnation, he has been brought, after much Reluctance and Unwillingneſs, to a forced Conſent to all this, hoping thereby

thereby to appease the divine Wrath and procure the divine Favour: Now to have all his self-righteous Hopes dash'd and confounded, by a Sight of the Badness of his Heart, by seeing he has no Love to God, no Sorrow for Sin, no Inclination to be holy, but averse to God and all that is Good, and that all his forced Goodness has no Virtue in it, that he is yet under the whole Guilt of all his Sin, under Condemnation of the Law and the Wrath of God, dead in Sin, an Enemy to God, absolutely at God's Mercy: This, this, I say, is dreadful indeed, and far more cross to the very Grain of the Sinner's Heart than all he ever met with before. Here therefore there will be the greatest Struggle and strongest Resistance, before ever the Sinner can, by the Spirit of God, be brought clearly to see and give into these Things. For all these Things are directly cross to the Sinner's Disposition to love himself supremely and live to himself ultimately, directly cross to a Spirit of Self-supremacy and Independency. The Sinner can't bear that God should be so great and so sovereign, and himself so vile, so little, so absolutely at Mercy. 'Tis a *killing* Thing. When the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I *died*. So that it is plain, that notwithstanding all the awakened Sinner's selfish Desires and Prayers, yet in the habitual Temper of his Heart, he stands disposed to resist the Influences of the divine Spirit, with all his Might. He is so far from being willing to repent of his Sins, that he is utterly unwilling to see and own his Sinfulness; so far from desiring to be humbled, that he is by no Means willing to see the Cause & Reason he has to be humbled; so far from desiring to be made spiritually alive, that he won't so much as own that he is spiritually dead; so far from desiring the gracious Influences of the holy Spirit to reconcile him to God, that he won't own that he is an Enemy to God, but would fain think, that he heartily desires to love God, and stands ready to hate and resist that Light, which would discover the Enmity of his Heart. *He that doth Evil, hateth the Light* and flees from it, *lest his evil Deeds be discovered*; and for the same Reason, he that hath an evil Heart, hates the Light and resists it, lest the Badness of his Heart be discovered.

7. From

7. From all that has been said we may learn, that those *Influences of the Spirit* which will be sufficient, *effectually* to awaken, convince and humble the Sinner, and recover him to God, must be *irresistible* and *supernatural*. That the internal Influences of the Holy Spirit are necessary to recover Sinners to God, is so plainly held forth every where in the Bible, that the *Arminians* themselves do not deny it. But *how much*, and *what Kind* of Influences are needful, is very much disputed. Now *so much*, and *such Sort* of Influences are beyond dispute, *needful*, as will be *sufficient effectually to answer the End*, and without which no Sinner will ever be converted. This is self-evident. If Sinners were so good natur'd, as to see and feel and own their Sinfulness, and the Justice of the Sentence whereby they stand condemned, and die to themselves, the World and Sin, and return home to God thro' Jesus Christ, to love him, live to him, and delight in him for ever, of their own Accord, merely upon reading the Bible and hearing the Law and the Gospel preached, then there would be no Need of any inward Influences of the Spirit at all. Or if they were so good natured, as to be easily perswaded to do so, then some small Degree of the inward Influences of the Spirit would do. But if, in the *first Place*, they are altogether averse to see and feel and own their Sin and Guilt, and the Justice of their Condemnation according to Law, and entirely disposed to hate and resist the Light, as hath but just now been proved, then they must be brought to it by an *all-conquering irresistible* Grace, or not at all. And if, in the *second Place*, the clearest Sight and greatest Sense a natural Man can have *of what God is*, instead of making him appear infinitely glorious and amiable, in the Eyes of one whose Heart is dead in Sin, and diametrically opposite to the divine Nature, will rather irritate Corruption, and make the native Enmity of the Heart ferment and rage, and become but the more apparent and sensible, as has been heretofore proved, then there must be a *supernatural*, *spiritual* and *divine* Change wrought in the Heart, by the *immediate* Influences of the Spirit of God, whereby it shall become *natural* to look upon God as infinitely glorious and amiable in being what he is, and so a Foundation hereby laid,

laid, for us to love him with all our Hearts, and so genuinely to repent, return and give up our selves to him, to live to him, and delight in him for ever; I say, if these Things be so, there must be such a Change wrought by the Spirit of God, or not one Sinner in the World will ever be converted to God. And therefore, that there is an absolute Necessity of such Influences of the Spirit of God, in order to a saving Conversion, is evident to a Demonstration, from the very Reason and Nature of Things. God himself must *take away the Heart of Stone* and *give an Heart of Flesh*, and *write his Law on our Hearts*, *raise us from the Dead*, *create us a-new*, *open our Eyes*, &c. &c. according to the Language of Scripture. And these Things God does do, for all that are renewed, and therefore they are said, *to be born of God*, *to be born of the Spirit*, *to be spiritual*, *to be made Partakers of the divine Nature*, &c. And God is said to give *Faith*, *Repentance*, and every divine Grace. *Ezek.* 36. 26. *Heb.* 8. 10. *Eph.* 2. 1—10. 1 *Cor.* 4. 6. *Joh.* 1. 13. & 3. 6. *Rom.* 8. 6, 9. 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. *Act.* 5. 31. *Jam.* 1. 17.

8. From what has been said we may learn *to understand the Doctrine of divine Sovereignty in the Bestowment of special Grace for the Regeneration and Conversion of Sinners.* The Scripture represents God as *choosing some before the Foundation of the World*, *to be holy and to be his Children.* Eph. 1. 4, 5. And teaches us that *whom he did predestinate*, *them he also calls*, *and whom he calls them he also justifies*, *and whom he justifies them he also glorifies.* Rom. 8. 30. And plainly intimates that *such as are given to Christ and ordained to eternal Life*, *believe*, *and none other.* Joh. 6. 37, 39. Act. 13. 48. Rom. 11. 7. And the Scriptures teach us that *God has Mercy on whom he will have Mercy*, *and Compassion on whom he will have Compassion.* Rom: 9. 18. And that *for the most Part*, *he passes by the rich and great and honourable*, *and chooses the meanest and most ignoble*, *that no Flesh might glory in his Presence.* 1 Cor. 1. 26—29. *He hides the Gospel from the wise and prudent*, *and reveals it to Babes*, *and that because it pleases him so to do*, *and Christ rejoyces in his sovereign Pleasure herein*, as displaying his infinite Wisdom. *Mat.* 11. 25, 26.

And

And now what has been said may shew us the infinite Reasonableness of such a Procedure. For, God, whose Eyes run to and fro thro' all the Earth, seeing all Things as being what they are, plainly beholds and views the State and Temper of this apostate World; and let Men pretend what they will, he knows their Hearts, he knows they don't love him nor care for him, he sees all their Hypocrisy and their inward Contrariety to him and his Law, and how much they are settled in their Temper; so far from Repentance, that they will not so much as see their Sin, but stand to justify themselves, insensible of their Guilt and insensible of their Desert, hating the Light; he sees they hate to see their Sin and Guilt and Desert, and to be humbled and lie down at his Foot, and be absolutely beholden to him; and that they would make the utmost Resistance if he should take them in Hand, and go about thoroughly to convince them by his Spirit how Things really be; thus he views his apostate, rebellious Creatures, & sees how sinful, how dead in Sin, how contrary to all Good, and how irreclaimable they be, and upon the whole how much they deserve eternal Damnation.—— In the Days of Eternity he saw just how Things would be before Hand, and now in Time he sees just how Things actually be. In the Days of Eternity therefore he saw that there would not be any Thing in them to move him to have Mercy on any, and now in Time he finds it to be the Case. And yet he was pleased *then* of his meer sovereign Pleasure to determine not to cast off all, but to save some; so *now* he is pleased to put his sovereign Pleasure in Execution; and he has Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and Compassion on whom he will have Compassion, and many Times takes the meanest and vilest, that the Sovereignty of his Grace might be the more illustrious, and the Pride of all Flesh might be brought low, and the Lord alone be exalted. And surely such a Conduct infinitely well becomes the supreme Governour of the whole World.

Indeed, if any of *Adam's* Race were so well disposed, as, of their own Accord, merely upon reading the Bible, hearing the Gospel preached, and enjoying the common Means of Grace, to believe and repent and to return home to God

thro'

thro' Jesus Christ, they might be accepted, pardoned and saved, nor would there be any Room for or Need of Sovereign Grace. But God who knows the Hearts of all, sees that all the Pretences of Sinners that Way are but mere Hypocrisy, and that at Heart they are his Enemies, and utterly averse to a Return.— Or if there was any Virtue to be found among any of the fallen Race of *Adam*, antecedent to God's Grace, this might move him to have Mercy upon one rather than another. But he sees that all are intirely destitute of Love to him, and intirely at Enmity against him, wholly void of real Goodness, and dead in Sin, and that the only Reason why some are not so outwardly extravagant and vicious as others, is, because he has by one Means and another restrained them, and not because they are really better.— And while God thus beholds all alike dead in Sin, and in the Temper of their Hearts by Nature equally averse to a Return to him, and views all as guilty and Hell-deserving, there is nothing, there can be nothing, to move him to determine to shew Mercy to one rather than another, but his own good Pleasure. And therefore he has Mercy on whom he will have Mercy; he awakens, convinces, humbles, converts whom he pleases, and leaves the rest to follow their own Inclinations, and take their own Course, *enduring with much Long-suffering the Vessels of Wrath.*

Let it be here noted, that many of those warm Disputes about the Doctrine of divine Sovereignty, which have filled the Christian World, turn very much upon *this Point.* All are agreed, that whosoever believes, repents and returns to God thro' Jesus Christ, shall be saved. All will, therefore, yield that if Mankind in general were so good natured, so well disposed, as to return to God thro' Jesus Christ of their own Accord, upon the Calls and Invitations of the Gospel, and only by the Influence and Help of those Advantages which are common, then all might be saved, nor would there be any Need of, or Room for, this sovereign, distinguishing Grace. But if Mankind have none of this good Nature, but are every Way diametrically opposite thereto; if all the Calls of the Gospel, and common Means and Methods of Grace, will have no effectual Influence upon them;

them; if nothing but an almighty, all-conquering Grace can ſtop them in their Courſe of Rebellion, ſubdue their Luſts, and recover them to God; if this be the Caſe of all Mankind, then it is plain, that nothing but the meer Mercy of God, can interpoſe and prevent a univerſal Ruin. And it is plain that the ſovereign Governour of the whole World is, in the Nature of Things, at moſt perfect Liberty to ſhew this Mercy, to none, or to ſome few, or to all, juſt as it ſeems good in his Sight. And ſince from Eternity he foreſaw juſt how Things would be, from Eternity he might determine what to do. So that the great Queſtion is, Whether Mankind are naturally ſo entirely averſe to a true Converſion? For if they be, the Reaſonableneſs of the divine Sovereignty muſt be admitted in this Caſe: and if they be not, none will any longer plead for it. —— And what the natural Oppoſition of Mankind to Converſion is, may be eaſily ſeen, if we conſider what the true Nature of Converſion is, and compare their Temper herewith. —— And what the true Nature of Converſion is, may be eaſily known by conſidering the true Nature of the moral Law.— In a Word, if the Law does only require what the *Arminians* and *Pelagians* ſuppoſe, and Religion be juſt ſuch a Thing, 'tis a plain Caſe, that Mankind are not ſo bad, nor do they need ſuch an irreſiſtible Grace. But if the Law requires quite another Sort of Holineſs, and ſo true Religion be quite another Sort of Thing, even ſuch as I have deſcribed, which lies ſo diametrically oppoſite to the natural Bent and Biaſs of our whole Souls, 'tis plain, 'tis a clear Caſe, that Grace muſt be irreſiſtible, and can proceed from nothing but meer free Mercy, nor reſult from any Thing but the ſovereign Pleaſure of the moſt High. So that in ſhort, the whole Diſpute is reſolved into this Queſtion, What does the Law of God require, and wherein does a genuine Conformity thereto conſiſt? But of this more afterwards.

And from what has been ſaid we may eaſily gather a plain and ſhort Anſwer to all the mighty Cry about *Promiſes, Promiſes to the Unconverted, if they will do as well as they can.* For 'tis plain, Heaven's Gates ſtand wide open to all that believe and repent and return to God thro' Jeſus Chriſt. *Joh.* 3. 16. And 'tis plain, the Wrath of God is revealed

revealed against all that do not so. *Joh.* 3. 36. And 'tis plain, that there is nothing but the want of a good Temper, together with the obstinate Perverseness of Sinners, that hinders their Return to God; and that therefore all their Pretences of being willing to do as well they can, are mere Hypocrisy. They are so unwilling to return to God, or take one Step that Way, that they can be brought back by nothing short of an almighty Power; and are so far, therefore, from being entitled to the Promises of the Gospel, that they are actually, and that deservedly too, under Condemnation by the Gospel, (*Joh.* 3. 18.) and under all the Curses of the Law, *Gal.* 3. 10. "Take heed therefore, O Sinner, thou Enemy of God, when you pretend "that you desire to repent and do as well as you can, that "you be not found quieting your self in a State of Estrangement from God, hiding your natural Aversion "to God & Holiness under fair Pretences. And know it "if you do, tho' you may deceive your self by the Means, "yet it will appear another Day before all Worlds, and it "will be known that you were an Enemy to God, and "*would not* be reconciled, and did but flatter him with "your Lips, and lie unto him with your Tongue, in all "your seemingly devout Pretences. You think your "self good enough to have an Interest in the Promises, "but infinite Goodness judges you deserve to be numbred "among the Children of Wrath and Heirs of Hell. *Joh.* "3. 18, 36. Your high Conceit of your own Goodness is "the Foundation of all your Confidence, and both join to "keep you secure in Sin and under Guilt, and insensible of "your need of Christ & sovereign Grace. *Luk.* 5. 31. *Rom.* 10. 3." Did Sinners but see the Badness of their Hearts, they would be soon convinced that the Promises are not theirs, but the Threatnings; and would feel & know that they have no Claims to make, but lie absolutely at Mercy. *Luk.* 18. 13.

9. And if it is nothing but the mere Grace & sovereign good Pleasure of God, which moves him to stop Sinners in their Career to Hell, and by his irresistible and all-conquering Grace, and by the supernatural Influences of his holy Spirit, subdue their Stubbornness, take down the Power of Sin in their Hearts, and recover them to himself:

And if he does this for them when they are at Enmity againſt him, and are his open Enemies by wicked Works, and ſo are altogether deſerving his Wrath and Vengeance; I ſay, if this be the Caſe, there is all Reaſon to think, *that he, who thus begins, will carry on the Work to Perfection.* — He knew how bad the Sinner was when he firſt took him in Hand, how he hated to be converted, and how he would reſiſt, and that his own almighty Arm muſt bring Salvation; and yet this did not diſcourage his firſt Undertaking. And he knew how the Sinner would prove after Converſion, juſt how barren and unfruitful, juſt how perverſe and rebellious, and juſt how apt to forget God and turn away from him, and that his own almighty Grace muſt always be working in him to will and to do. *Phil.* 2. 13. — He knew all the diſcouraging Circumſtances before-hand, and his infinite Goodneſs ſurmounted them all, and he had Mercy on the poor Sinner becauſe he would have Mercy on him, of his meer good Pleaſure, from his boundleſs Grace, aiming at the Glory of his own great Name. *Eph.* 1. 6.—And now this being the Caſe, we have all Reaſon to think, that God will never alter his Hand, or leave unfiniſhed the Work which he has begun. For there always will be the ſame Motive from which he undertook the Work, to excite him to carry it on, even the infinite Goodneſs of his Nature; and he will be always under the ſame Advantages, to anſwer the End he at firſt propoſed, namely, the Advancement of the Glory of his Grace. And he will never meet with any unforeſeen Difficulties or Diſcouragements in his Way. We may therefore be pretty certain, if really God begins this Work, under ſuch Views and ſuch Circumſtances, that it is with Deſign to carry it on. As *Samuel* reaſons in a parallel Caſe. 1 Sam. 12. 22. *For the Lord will not forſake his People for his great Name's ſake: becauſe it hath pleaſed the Lord to make you his People.* So that if the Doctrine of the *Saints Perſeverance* were not expreſly taught in Scripture, yet on this Ground we might argue very ſtrongly for it. — But that this is a Doctrine plainly revealed in the Goſpel we may learn, from *Mat.* 13. 23. *Joh.* 4. 14. & 10. 4, 5, 27, 28. 1 *Joh.* 3. 6, 9. *Heb.* 8. 10. *&c. &c.*—When St. *Paul* kept under his Body and

and brought it into Subjection, *LEST he should be a Cast-away*, (1 *Cor.* 9. 27.) He did no otherwise than he was wont to do in temporal Concerns, in Cases wherein he was beforehand *certain of the Event*. So he sent Word to the *chief Captain*, of the *Jews* lying in wait to kill him, *lest he should be murdered by them*; whenas it was revealed to him from God, but the very Night before, that he should live to see *Rome*. *Act.* 23. 12—21. So he would not allow the *Sailors* to leave the Ship in the midst of the Storm, *lest they should some of them be drowned* for want of their Help; whenas, but a little before it was revealed to him from God that not one of them should be drowned. *Act.* 27. 23—31. And indeed, it was his Duty to do as he did, as much as if he had been at the greatest Uncertainties about the Event. So altho' *Paul* knew that never *any Thing should separate him from the Love of God*, (Rom. 8. 38.) Yet he used all possible Endeavours to mortify his Corruptions, *lest he should be a Cast-away*. And indeed, it was his Duty to do so, as much as if he had been at the greatest Uncertainties about the Event. And what was his Duty, was also the Duty of all good Men; and therefore St. *Paul* in his *Epistles* is frequently exhorting all, to do as he did: and that in a perfect Consistency with the Doctrine of the *Saints Perseverance*, which he also teaches. And as *Paul*'s being *certain of the Event*, did not tend to make him careless in the Use of proper Means to save his natural Life, but rather tended to encourage and animate him, as knowing that he should finally succeed; so his being *certain of the Event*, did not tend to make him careless, but to animate him, with respect to his spiritual and eternal Life. And as it was with him, so it is with all good Men. *Rom.* 6. 2. For this is always the Case, that Certainty of Success, animates Men; if the Thing they are about, be what they love and what their Hearts are engaged in; but to die to themselves, the World and Sin, and love God, and live to him, and grow up into perfect Holiness, is what all Believers love and have their Hearts engaged after; an absolute Certainty, therefore, of Perseverance has, in the Nature of Things, the greatest Tendency to animate them to the most sprightly Activity. There are none but grace-

leſs Hypocrites, that take Encouragement, from the Doctrines of free Grace, to Careleſneſs and Sin. *Rom.* 6. 1, 2.

10. If this be the Nature of a ſaving Converſion, if this be the Nature of true Holineſs, if this be true Religion, ſo *contrary* to Fleſh and Blood, and all the habitual Propenſities of Nature, *then ſo long as there is the leaſt Corruption left in the Heart, there will, of Neceſſity, be a continual Conflict.* Grace will continually ſeek the Ruin of Sin, thro' it's Contrariety to it and Hatred of it; and Sin will ſtrive to maintain it's Ground, yea and to regain it's former Dominion. The gracious Nature delights in the Law of God, and aſpires after ſinleſs Perfection; the ſinful Nature hates the Law of God, and ſtrives to lead the Man captive into Sin. The gracious Nature is a Diſpoſition to love God ſupremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him ſuperlatively; and this ſinful Nature is a Diſpoſition to love Self ſupremely, live to Self ultimately, and delight in that which is not God, wholly: and becauſe theſe two *are contrary the one to the other*, therefore *the Fleſh will luſt againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh.* Gal. 5. 17. The gracious Nature joins in on God's Side againſt all Sin; and while God *works in the Man to will and to do, he works out his own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, with Caution and Circumſpection, with Watchfulneſs and holy Concern; labouring to die to himſelf, the World and Sin, and be wholly the Lord's. *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. While God is, by his Spirit, realiſing to his Heart the Being and Perfections of God, the Exiſtence and Importance of divine and eternal Things, and is ſpreading divine Light over his Soul, and is baniſhing ſelfiſh and worldly Views, and is drawing his Soul to holy and divine Contemplations; he feels the divine Influence, he bleſſes the Lord, he ſummons all within him to Engagedneſs, he pants after God. "O that I "might know him, that I might ſee him in his infinite "Glory! (*Pſal.* 63. 1, 2.) *O God, thou art my God, early "will I ſeek thee: my Soul thirſteth for thee, my Fleſh longeth "for thee, in a dry and thirſty Land, where no Water is: To "ſee thy Power and thy Glory, ſo as I have ſeen thee in the "Sanctuary.* (*v.* 8.) *My Soul followeth hard after thee.* "(Pſal. 73. 25.) *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And "there*

" *there is none upon Earth I desire besides thee.* O that I " could, with my whole Heart, love thee for ever, live to " thee for ever, live upon thee for ever, and never, never, " depart from thee! O that I could think for thee, and " speak for thee, and act for thee; at Home and Abroad, " by Day and by Night, always live to thee and upon " thee! Here, Lord, I give my self to thee to be for ever " thine, to love thee and to fear thee, and to walk in all " thy Ways and to keep all thy Commands; and O that " my Heart might never depart from thee!——But alas, " alas, *to will is present with me*, to have a Disposition to " all this, and long for all this, and seek and strive for all " this, is easy and natural, *for I delight in the Law of God* " *after the inward Man*; *but how to perform I find not*; " how to get my whole Heart, so to fall in, as that there " shall not be the least contrary Temper, this is clean be- " yond me, *for I am still carnal, sold under Sin, have another* " *Law in my Members*, have still the Remains *(of the Flesh)* " of my native Contrariety to God and Disposition to dis- " relish divine Things; and so am apt to forget God, to " warp off from him, and to have selfish and worldly Views " and Designs secretly creep into my Mind and steal away " my Heart from God, and so am daily *led into Captivity*. " O that Sin was entirely dead, that a Disposition to dis- " relish God, to forget him, to go away from him, to live " without him, and to seek Content in that which is not " God, was entirely slain! *O wretched Man that I am,* " *who shall deliver me?* Rom. 7. 14———24.

If Grace and Corruption were not so contrary the one to the other, so diametrically opposite, there might possibly be an Accommodation between them, and both quietly dwell together in the same Heart: But now they are set for each other's Ruin, and seek each other's Destruction, and like Fire and Water will never rest, till one or the other be entirely destroyed. *Gal.* 5. 17.

If Grace could be wholly killed, or Corruption wholly slain, then the Conflict of Believers might wholly cease in this Life; but Grace is immortal, like a *living Spring* that shall never dry, *(Joh.* 4. 14.*)* like a *Root* that will ever grow, (*Mat.* 13. 20—23) and Christ is always *purging* Be-

lievers, that they may *bring forth more Fruit*. (*Joh.* 15. 2.) So that *he that is born of God cannot Sin as others do*, (1 *Joh.* 3. 9.) cannot Sin, but againſt the Grain of his Heart, the gracious Nature continually reſiſting. (*Gal.* 5. 17.) So that it is certain, from the Nature of Things, that *David* and *Solomon*, neither of them felt, in their worſt Frames, as graceleſs Men do. Grace reſiſted within, (*Gal.* 5. 17.) hating their Proceedings, nor did it ceaſe inwardly to ſtruggle and torment them, till the one cries out, *My Bones wax old thro' my roaring all the Day long.* Pſal. 52. 3. For *his Sin was ever before his Eyes.* Pſal. 31. 3. And the other, *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.* Eccl. 1. 2.

Many *Stony-Ground-Hearers*, who were once filled with Light and Joy, do when their Religion is all worn out, and they lie dead and blind and ſtupid whole Months and Years together, cry, *The beſt are dead ſometimes*; and have Recourſe to *David* and *Solomon*: and many a Hypocrite, whoſe Religion is only by Fits and Pangs, ſometimes floated as the Streets be in Summer, by a ſudden Shower, and then in a few Days as dry as ever, deceive themſelves here; and many take natural Conſcience to be a Principle of Grace, and the War between that and their Corruptions to be a gracious Conflict: But as all counterfeit Religions are ſpecifically different from the true, as has been already ſhewn, ſo by Conſequence their Conflict is different from that which Believers have, in it's very Nature. They fight, from different Principles, and for different Ends, and about different Things, and in a different Manner, juſt as their Religions differ from one another.

11. If this be the Nature of Converſion and Holineſs, and the Manner wherein they are wrought, and if true Religion be thus ſpecifically different from all Counterfeits, *then may Believers be infallibly certain that they have true Grace.* A Man cannot but perceive his own Thoughts, and know what Views he has, and be intuitively acquainted with his own Deſigns and Aims; ſo every Man knows it is with him, as to the Things of this World. Much leſs is it poſſible that there ſhould be *ſo great a Change* in a Man's Heart and Life, Thoughts, Affections and Actions, as there is

is made by Conversion, and yet he know nothing about it. For a Man to be awakened, out of a State of Security in Sin, to see what a sinful, guilty, helpless, lost, undone Estate he is in, and yet not to perceive any Thing of it, evidently implies a Contradiction, and so is in the Nature of Things impossible. For a Man to be brought to see God in his infinite Glory, so as to be disposed to love him supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively,& yet not to perceive it, i. e. not to be conscious of his Views and Affections, also implies a Contradiction, and so is impossible. For a Man to lose his selfish and worldly Views more and more, from Year to Year, and die to himself, the World and Sin, and for a Man to live a Life of Communion with God, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of the Lord, and yet not at all to perceive it, is utterly impossible. For the Mind of Man is naturally conscious to it's own Actings. So, from the Nature of Things, it is evident that Grace is perceptible. Yea, in it's own Nature, it must be as perceptible as Corruption, Love to God as Love to the World, Sorrow for Sin as Sorrow for Affliction, aiming at God's Glory as aiming at our own Honour and Interest. But if true Grace be in it's own Nature perceptible, and if it be also specifically different from all Counterfeits, it is Self-evident that a good Man may know that he has true Grace. I cannot see why, extraordinary Cases excepted, a good Man, who lives a Life of Communion with and Devotedness to God, and in the daily Exercise of every Grace, may not come to know that he has Grace. Surely he must be conscious to the Actings of his own Mind; for this is natural. And surely he may see the Difference between his Religion and all Counterfeits, when the Difference is so great & plain. So that if the Scriptures did not expressly teach us that Assurance is attainable, it is yet evidently demonstrable from the Nature of Things.

But the Scriptures do plainly teach this Doctrine, in 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. 1 *Joh.* 5. 13. 1 *Joh.* 2. 3. and 3. 14. &c. &c.— Besides, all those Promises, that are made for the Comfort and Support of God's People in this World, suppose that they may know that they are the People of God. For unless a Man knows, that he is a Child of God, he cannot rationally

rationally take Comfort in thoſe Promiſes, which are peculiar to ſuch. It is true, brazen Hypocrites will do ſo, but they act very preſumptuouſly. It is Folly & Madneſs for me to flatter my ſelf, that God has promiſed to do ſo and ſo for me, unleſs I knew that I am one to whom the Promiſes belong. For Inſtance, it is Folly and Madneſs for me to *believe*, that God will make *all Things work together for my Good*, according to that Promiſe in *Rom.* 8. 28. unleſs I know that *I love God:* For this Promiſe plainly reſpects ſuch, and no other. But there are very many precious Promiſes made to Believers in the Word of God, which are evidently deſigned for their Comfort and Support. It is certain therefore that God thinks that Believers may *know* they are ſuch, without which Knowledge, all theſe Promiſes cannot attain this their End.

Beſides, to ſuppoſe that to be a Servant of God and a Servant of the Devil, to be going the Way to Heaven and the Way to Hell, to be travelling in the narrow Way and to be travelling in the broad Way, are ſo near alike, as that even good Men themſelves cannot poſſibly know them aſunder, and which Way they are going, is on every Account intolerably abſurd; nor could the Chriſtian World have poſſibly drunk in ſuch a Notion but that true Grace is ſo very rare a Thing.

I may here by the Way juſt obſerve theſe three Things. 1. *That the Way for a Man to know that he has Grace, is not to try himſelf by fallible Signs, but intuitively to look into himſelf and ſee Grace.* A Thouſand Signs of Grace will not prove that a Man has Grace. There is no Sign of Grace to be depended upon, but Grace it ſelf: For every Thing, but Grace, a Hypocrite may have. And what Grace, Holineſs, or true Religion is, I have already endeavoured to ſhew.—— 2. *That the Way for a Man to know that he has Grace, is not to judge himſelf by the Degree and Meaſure of his religious Frames and Affections, or the Height of his Attainments; but by the ſpecial Nature of them.* For as there is not any one Grace but a Hypocrite may have it's Counterfeit, ſo Hypocrites may riſe as high in *their* Religion as any true Believer does in *his.* Was *Elijah* the Prophet jealous for the Name and Worſhip of the true God and againſt

against false Religion? So was *Jehu*. And he appeared as full of Zeal, and more Couragious, and did greater Exploits. There was scarce a more zealous Saint than *Elijah*, in all *Old-Testament* Times; but yet *Jehu*, that Hypocrite, made a much greater Shew and Noise, seemed to be fuller of Zeal, and Courage, and actually did greater Exploits, setting aside the Miracles God wrought by *Elijah*. (1 *Kings* 18, and 19. Chap.—2 *Kings* 9, and 10. Chap.) And we don't read of one Saint, in all the *Bible*, that fasted in a constant Way, twice every Week, as the *Pharisee* did. (*Luk.* 18.) And there is not one Saint in all the *Bible* that ever did, externally and visibly, any higher Acts of Self-denial, than to give *all his Goods to feed the Poor, and his Body to be burnt*, and yet St. *Paul* intimates that a Man may do so and still have no Grace in his Heart. 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. It is no certain Evidence therefore, that a Man is a good Man, because he has a *great deal* of Religion, more than the most, and full as much as the best, yea more than any in all the Country, yea, or in all the whole World. For in *Jehu's* Time, there was not perhaps for a while one like him, upon the Face of the whole Earth. A Man therefore cannot know that he is a good Man, by the *Degree* of his Religion, but only from the *special Nature* of it. And wherein true Religion *specifically* differs from all Counterfeits, I have already shewn.—3. Since Grace is in it's own Nature *perceptible*, and *specifically different* from all Counterfeits, *there is no Need of the immediate Witness of the Spirit, in order to a full Assurance.* If the Spirit of God does but give us a good Degree of Grace, and enlighten our Minds to understand the Scriptures, and so to know the Nature of true Grace, we may then perceive that we have Grace. And the more Grace we have, the more perceptible will it be, and it's difference from all Counterfeits will be the more plain. And if a Believer may know, and be certain, that he has Grace, without the immediate Witness of the Spirit, then such a Witness is altogether needless, and would be of no Advantage; but God never grants his Spirit to Believers to do Things needless and to no Advantage: and therefore there is no such Thing as the immediate Witness of the Spirit in this Affair. And besides, 'tis plain, the Scriptures *every where* direct

direct us to look into our selves, to see whether we love God and keep his Commands, to see whether Christ in his holy Nature be formed in us, to see whether the Spirit as an enlightener and sanctifier dwells in us and influences and governs us; but never *once* directs us to look for the *immediate* Witness of the Spirit, in order to know whether we have Grace.

OBJ. *But the Text says expressly*, The Spirit it self beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God. *Rom.* 8. 16.

ANS. But the Text does not in the least intimate, that the Spirit witnesses *immediately*. The Spirit *bears witness*; but how? The Spirit *makes it evident*, that we are the Children of God; but in what Way? *By immediate Revelation!* No, the Scripture no where tells us to look for such Revelations, or lays down any Marks whereby we may know which come from God, and which from the Devil. How then does the Spirit make it *evident* that we are the Children of God, and by what *Witness* does he make it appear? Not by *telling* of us that we are Children; the Devil may *tell* Hypocrites so; but by *making of us Children in the very Temper of our Hearts*, by giving to us *much* of a *Child-like* Frame of Spirit towards God, a Thing the Devil cannot do, and so a Thing by which we may certainly know. This holy, divine, child-like Frame and Temper of Heart, whereby we bear the very Image of our heavenly Father, is God's *Mark*, which, more or less conspicuously, he sets upon all the *Lambs* of his Flock. This is the *Seal of the Spirit*. (Eph. 1. 13.) For this is the *Earnest of our Inheritance*, (*v.* 14.) 'Tis *eternal Life begun* in the Soul. (*Joh.* 17. 3.) This is called the *Witness of the Spirit*, because it is *what the Spirit works* in our Hearts, and that by which he *makes it evident* that we are the Children of God: the *Design* of *Witnesses* being to *make* Things *evident*. And indeed this is the *only distinguishing Mark* that God puts upon his Children, and the *only Thing* wherein they differ from all Hypocrites, and is the *only Evidence* the Scripture directs them to look for and expect, and without which all other Evidences are just good for Nothing. *Mat.* 7. 24—27. *Joh.* 15. 2. 1 *Joh.* 2. 3, 4. and 3. 6—10.

And

And this being the Case, we may see how much out of the Way those be, who think and say, *that it is a Sin for them to doubt the Goodness of their State, because of their Badness, & because they can see no Grace in their Hearts.* "For, say they, that "would be to call God's Truth & Faithfulness into Question, "who has by his Spirit immediately assured me of his "Love and my Salvation; just as if the Immutability of "his Purpose depended upon my good Frames. No, I "must do as *Abraham* did, *who against Hope, believed in* "*Hope*; so tho' I see no Grace in my Heart or Signs of "any, yet I must believe my State is good, and that I shall "be saved. It is not my Duty to look so much into my "own Heart, I shall never be the better for that; but I "must look to Christ, and believe, and never doubt. For "the Spirit of God did at *such a Time* assure me of Christ's "Love to me, and I knew I was not deceived, and it would "now be a great Sin in me to doubt, it would be a giving "the Lie to Christ and to the holy Spirit."

How sad a Delusion are such poor Sinners under, who dare not believe the holy Scriptures, for fear they shall Sin, which every where assure us, that unless we are holy in Heart and Life, our Faith is vain and we in a State of Condemnation; and teach us that we ought to be no more confident of our good Estate, than in Proportion as our Sanctification is evident! How sad it is that they should attribute all their Doubts to *carnal Reason* or the *Devil*, which indeed are but the secret Dictates of their own Consciences, and are so agreeable to the Word of God! What a *dreadful Spirit* is this, that thus leads them off from the Word of God; and so blinds their Minds, that they cannot understand it, nor dare believe it! Surely it can be no other than *Satan transformed into an Angel of Light.* *

Alas!

* Obj. *But the Scripture forbids Doubting.* Mat. 14 31. O thou of little Faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Answ. In that Text Christ does not blame *Peter* for doubting his State, but for doubting he should be drowned.

Obj. *But Christ* upbraided them with their Unbelief, *Mar.* 16. 14.

Answ. He did not blame them for not believing they were in a good Estate, but for not believing that he was risen from the Dead.

Obj. *But Abraham is commended, in that* against Hope he believed in Hope, *Rom.* 4. 18.

Answ.

Alas! Alas! How does the God of this World blind the Minds of them that believe not! Some firmly believe that there is no such Thing, as a good Man's knowing that he has Grace; and so they contentedly live along, not knowing what World they are hastening unto, to Heaven or to Hell; but they *hope* their State is good, and *hope* their *Hope* is well grounded, but *know* not but that their *Hope* is that of the Hypocrite. Yea, they are not willing to believe there is any such Thing as *knowing*, for that would make them suspect that they are wrong, and that true Religion is something they never had: which if it be the Case, yet they are not willing to know it. They hide themselves in the dark!

Answ. But the Thing to be believed, and hoped for, was, that he should have a Son, which he had good Grounds to expect: So this is nothing to the Purpose.

Obj. *But St. Paul says*, We walk by Faith, and not by Sight, 2 Cor. 5. 7.

Answ. That is, in all their Conduct they were governed by a realizing Belief of unseen Things, and not by Things seen and temporal. 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. It was not *Paul*'s Way to lie dead whole Months and Years together, nor was he ever drove to such a Strait, as to be forced to believe himself to be in a good Estate, without sufficient Evidence.

Obj. *But*, what is not of Faith, is Sin, *Rom.* 14. 23. *But Doubts arise from Unbelief.*

Answ. 1. If any Man does not believe that it is lawful for him to do some particular Act, and yet ventures to do it, he sins, he acts against his own Conscience. This is the plain Sense of the Text. And so this Text is nothing to the Purpose.

2. An Hypocrite's Doubts are wont to arise from Unbelief. i.e. from his not stedfastly believing the immediate Revelations which he had from the Devil, *that his Sins are pardoned.* The Devil trys to keep him quiet, but sometimes his Conscience is a little awakened, and then he fears and doubts he is deluded; and now the Devil tries to make him believe that it is a Sin to doubt. The Devil would fain make him believe all is well, i. e. believe at a venture, without a thoro' Search and Trial, and without sufficient Evidence.

3. It is a Sin for a true Believer to live so as not to have his Evidences clear; but it is no Sin for him to be so honest and impartial, as to doubt, when in Fact his Evidences are not clear. It is a Sin to darken his Evidences; but it is no Sin to see that they are darkened. It is a Sin for a Man, by Rioting and Drunkenness, to make himself sick; but it is no Sin to feel that he is sick; or, if there be Grounds for it, to doubt he shall die. We may bring Calamities upon our selves by our Sins, both outward and inward; and our Calamities may arise from our Sins; and yet our Calamities have not the Nature of *Sins*,

dark! They say, There is no Light! And will not believe that a good Man may *know that he has passed from Death to Life.* While *others* from the very same Principle, viz. *because they hate the Light*, firmly believe that it is *a Sin to doubt*; and so will never, dare never, call their State into Question, and thoro'ly look thro' the Matter. Both are equally rotten at Heart, and so equally hate the Light, altho' they take different Methods to keep from it. And the Devil does his utmost, to keep both fast bound where they are.

Happy the true Believer, who is made impartial by divine Grace! It is a Recovery to God and Holiness, that he is after; a Confidence that his Sins are pardoned, without *this*, would be but a poor Thing. If he obtains *this*, he gets what he wants: and if not, he feels himself undone; nor can he flatter himself that he has obtained it, when he has not. And *this* he makes his only Evidence of God's eternal Love, and of his Title to eternal Glory; and believes his State to be good, no farther than this goes. *Mat.* 7. 21——27.

Thus I have gone thro' the *first Use*, the Use of *Instruction*. And thus we see how a right understanding of the *Law*, will set many of the Important Doctrines of Religion in a clear and easy, in a scriptural and rational Light. By the *Law* we may learn the primitive State of Man,

Sins, but are rather of the Nature of *Punishments*. 'Tis Sin in Believers which lays the Foundation for Doubts; 'tis Sin which is the Occasion of their Doubts; but their Doubts are not Sins e'er the more for this. Some seem to suppose that every Thing which is occasioned by Sin, is Sin: but there is no Truth in their Supposition. 'Tis not a Sin for unconverted People to think themselves to be unconverted, and yet that Thought of themselves is occasioned by Sin: for their being unconverted is their Sin.

Obj. *But Believers are exhorted* to hold fast their Confidence. *Heb.* 3. 6. *And it is said*, ver. 14. For we are made Partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our Confidence stedfast unto the End.

Answ. That is, their Confidence that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, together with a true Faith in him, as is manifest from the whole Context. Nor is any Thing more absurd than to say, that Men shall *be made Partakers of Christ*, if they hold fast their *Confidence* of *their good Estate*, which is what many a Hypocrite does, and that to the very last. *Mat.* 7.22. *Luk.* 13. 25, 26, 27.

Man, and how low we are fallen, and to what we must be recovered; and so by Consequence how averse we are to a Recovery, what Grace we need to recover us; and so by Consequence that we must be saved by sovereign Grace, or not at all; whence the Reasonableness of the Saints Perseverance appears; and from the whole, the Nature of the christian Conflict, and the Attainableness of Assurance are discovered. And I will conclude this *Use* with two *Remarks*.

Remark 1. If the Law requires what, I think, I have proved it does, and a Conformity to it consists in what I have before described; then all the other Particulars do necessarily & most inevitably follow: Such was the Image of God in which *Adam* was created, and such is our natural Depravity, and such are the best Duties of the Unregenerate, and such is the Nature of Conversion, and our Aversion to it, &c. So that if my first Principles are true, then the whole Scheme is beyond Dispute true also.—And what are my first Principles? Why, that to love God with all our Hearts, and our Neighbours as our selves, is originally the very Essence of Religion: And that the Grounds upon which God requires us so to do, are to be the Motives of our Obedience. He requires us to love him supremely &c. because he is supremely glorious and amiable, and because our additional Obligations to him are what they are. He requires us to love our Neighbours as our selves, because they are what they are, and stand in such Relations to us. With a perfect moral Rectitude of Temper, influenced and governed by Truth, by the Reason and Fitness of Things, he would have us love and glorify him as GOD, i. e. as being what he is; and love and treat our Neighbours as being what they are. And is not this *evidently* the meaning of the divine Law?

Remark 2. If the Law, as a Rule of Life, be so abated and altered, as that now it *only* requires us merely from a Principle of Self-love and for Self-Ends sincerely to endeavour to love God and keep his Commands, and aim at his Glory: and if the Law, as a Covenant, be disannulled, and such an Obedience be substituted in the Room of Perfection, as a Condition of eternal Life, or as a Condition

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of our Interest in Christ; then the contrary to all that I have laid down is most true and certain. For let the primitive State of Man be what it would, 'tis plain, we are not entirely destitute of a Conformity to this *new Law*, much less diametrically opposite to it in the natural Temper of our Minds, nor are our best Duties, while unregenerate, Sin; 'tis plain, Conversion is another and a much easier Thing, and that we are not so intirely averse to it, and do not need irresistible Grace, nor lie at God's sovereign Mercy, &c. All these Things, and many more such like, are plain, if the *good old Law* is thus altered and abated, and thus disannulled, if the *new Law* requires no more, and this be the Condition of eternal Life, or of an Interest in Christ.— So that if any are disposed to disbelieve what have been laid down as Consequences, and to build up another Fabrick, if they will be consistent with themselves, they can lay no other Foundation than this, viz. *To destroy the Law*; which I have before proved to be as impossible as to destroy the Nature of God; because the moral Law necessarily results from the divine Perfections, and our Obligations to conform to it are infinite, eternal and unchangeable, as the Nature and Perfections of God himself.

And therefore, I think, we may conclude with the greatest Certainty, that this Foundation, *viz.* that the Law is thus abated and altered, is but Sand; and that the Fabrick built upon it will not stand. If the Law had required us to love our selves supremely, and live to our selves ultimately, and to have endeavoured to love God and our Neighbours only to answer our own Ends; then this Sort of Religion would have been right. Did I say, *right?* No, it would not be right, being unalterably contrary to the very Reason and Nature of Things; nor could such a Law have been possibly made by a God who loves Righteousness, and hates Iniquity.—But if this was *right*, if this was Religion, 'tis plain, Mankind have *the Root of the Matter* in them; for they are all naturally inclined to love themselves supremely, and live to themselves ultimately; and so would not need *to be born again*, to have *a new Nature*; the *old Nature* would be sufficient; they would only need to be con-

vinced that it is for their Intereſt to endeavour to love God and do their Duty, and merely Self-love would make them religious, in order to anſwer their own Ends. But if the Law never has been thus abated and altered, then this Religion is really no Religion at all, nothing but mere Hypocriſy, and of a Nature diametrically oppoſite to true Holineſs. Only let it be clearly determined, *What the Nature of the moral Law is*, and there will be a final End put to a hundred Controverſies.

Here is a Man, he reforms his Life a little, and joins with the Church, he prays in his Family, and ſometimes in his Cloſet, and for the moſt Part, it may be, he is honeſt in his Dealings, and civil and ſober in his Behaviour; and this is his Converſion, this is his Religion. And now he pleads, that Converſion is a gradual Thing, becauſe his was ſuch; and that a Man cannot know when he was converted, becauſe that is the Caſe with him; that there is no Need of irreſiſtible Grace, becauſe he knows that it is a pretty eaſy Thing to convert as he has done; and he hates the Doctrine of divine Sovereignty, becauſe he never felt any Need of a ſovereign Grace to ſave him; and he holds falling from Grace, becauſe his Religion is as eaſily loſt as got.—But does he know that he has any Grace, after all? No, no, that is a Thing (ſays he) none can know. He believes, the holy Spirit aſſiſts him; but he is not ſenſible of his Influences or of any Help from him, any more than if he had none. He believes, he loves God and is a true Saint at Heart; but he does not feel any more Love to God, or Grace in his Heart, than as if there was none there; and the Reaſon is, becauſe there is none. But being ſecure in Sin, and it being for his worldly Intereſt to make a Profeſſion of Religion, he now ſets up for a good Man. *For without the Law Sin is dead*, and ſo he is *alive without the Law*. Rom. 7. 8, 9. And now thoſe Doctrines and that Preaching, which is calculated to detect his Hypocriſy and awaken him out of his Security, he hates and cries out againſt. And if any ſeem to experience any Thing further in Religion than he has, for that very Reaſon, he condemns it all for Deluſion. But he pretends mightily to plead up for Morality and good Works, tho' in Truth he

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is an Enemy to all real Holiness. This is the Course of many, but some are more sincere and strict and conscientious in their Way.

But let Men be ever so sincere, strict and conscientious in their Religion, if all results merely from Self-love, the slavish Fears of Hell, and mercenary Hopes of Heaven; there is not in all their Religion, the least real genuine Conformity to the moral Law. It is all but an hypocritical, feigned Shew of Love and Obedience. It is not the Thing which the Law requires, but something of a quite different Nature: unless we lay aside God's old and everlasting Law, and invent a new, abated, altered Law, which shall declare that to be right, which in the Nature of Things is unalterably wrong: and by such a Law, such a Religion will pass for genuine. But it is sad, when we are drove to invent a *new Law*, to vindicate our Religion and our Hopes of Heaven; since at the Day of Judgment we shall find the *old Law* to be in full Force.

I am sensible, that *old Objection* will always be rising: "But it is not just that God should require of us more "than we can do, and then threaten to damn us for not "doing of it." Just as if God may not require us to love him with all our Hearts, merely because we are not suited with him: And just as if we were not to Blame for being of such a bad Temper and Disposition, merely because we are thoro'ly settled in it and have no Heart to be otherwise: Just as if the worse any one is, the less he is to Blame; than which nothing can be more absurd. Truly, I cannot but think, that by this, we are so far from being excused, that even merely for this, we deserve eternal Damnation. For what can be much worse, than be so thoro'ly settled and fixed in such a bad Temper of Mind?——But notwithstanding all that I have offered to clear this Point heretofore, I will add, that if it is not just for God to require any more of us than we *can do*; i. e. any more than we have, not only a *natural*, but a *moral* Power to perform; then these Things will necessarily follow:

1. *That there was not the least Need of Christ's dying for us as our Redeemer.* For, did we need him to make any Atonement or Satisfaction for our Sins? Surely no. For

God could not juſtly require of us more Satisfaction for our Sins, than we were able to make; for that would be to require more than we can do.— Did we need him to purchaſe the divine Favour and eternal Life for us? Surely no. For God could not juſtly require any more of us as a Condition of his Favour and eternal Life, than we our ſelves were able to do.— Did we need him to purchaſe an Abatement of the Law? Surely no. For God could not in his Law juſtly require of us more than we could do; and we did not need to have the Law brought down lower than this.— Well therefore might St. *Paul* tell the *Galations*, that *if Righteouſneſs came by the Law, then Chriſt is dead in vain.* Gal. 2. 21. For if our doing as well as we can, in the Senſe before explained, is all that *Righteouſneſs* that God can juſtly require; this alone moſt certainly would be every Way ſufficient for our Salvation; nor did we need a Saviour any more than the Angels in Heaven; for we have juſt as much Power *to do as well as we can*, as they have *to do as well as they can.* To ſay the contrary, is a Contradiction in expreſs Terms.

2. *Nor was there the leaſt Need that the holy Spirit ſhould be ſent into the World, to grant any inward Aſſiſtance, to enable us to do our Duty*; for we had a full and perfect Power to do all our Duty, without any ſuch Aſſiſtance; for God could not juſtly require of us, any more than we could do; and every one is *able* to do what he *can*, without any Aſſiſtance.

So that if this Principle be true, *that God cannot juſtly require of us any more than we can do*, it is plain we neither needed a *Redeemer* nor a *Sanctifier*; So that all the infinite Pains which God has taken for our Redemption and Salvation, has been unneceſſary and fruitleſs. To do as well as we could, was all that would have been needful; and this is ſtill as much required as ever. So that we are juſt where we ſhould have been, if nothing had ever been done for us. So that this Notion entirely undermines and ſubverts the whole *Chriſtian Religion*, in ſuppoſing that all the extraordinary and wonderful Proviſion therein made for the Salvation of Sinners was needleſs. For if all was needleſs, then the whole is perfectly incredible; for it is incredible to ſuppoſe that God

God would do *so much* and *such great* Things, when there was no Need of it. So that this Notion leads directly to Infidelity. Yea, if this Principle be true, we may be certain that the Gospel is full of Deceit; for the Gospel every where supposes Sinners to have been in a *helpless*, *undone* Estate, and that they might justly have been left so, and perished for ever. And it every where represents it as owing entirely to the free Grace and infinitely great Goodness of God, that he sent his Son into the World to be a Saviour, and the holy Spirit to be a Sanctifier; *all which*, upon this Principle, is notoriously false. For we were not in a *helpless*, *undone* Condition; being able, of our selves, to do *all* that God could justly require of us, in order to eternal Life. Nor did we need to be beholden to God for his Grace and Goodness, his Son or his Spirit; being able, of our selves, to do *all* that which he could justly require at our Hands. Yea, upon this Principle, the Gospel offers the *highest Affront* to human Nature, in that it supposes us to be such vile, helpless, undone, guilty Wretches, when, indeed, and in Truth, we be not. And therefore so long as Men really believe this Notion, they cannot possibly but hate the Doctrines of the Gospel, and oppose them. And so, in Fact, it has always been.

To conclude, therefore, since it is so evident from the *Law*, and so evident from the *Gospel*, that we are sinful, guilty, helpless, undone Creatures; had not we better give into it, and come down, and lie in the Dust, before the Lord, who knows what we be, whether we will own it or no? Had we not better own his Law to be holy, just and good, and acknowledge that we lie at his sovereign Mercy, and be willing to be beholden to free Grace thro' Jesus Christ for our Salvation; since we must do so, or never be saved? What will it profit us to fly in his Face, and say, *It is not just for him to require more than we can do, and then damn us for not doing?* When all that he requires, is only that we *love God with all our Hearts, and our Neighbour as our selves*; which, in the Nature of Things is infinitely reasonable; and when all our Impotency arises only from our Badness, and so, instead of extenuating our Fault, only discovers how bad we be. Surely since all the World

ſtand guilty before God, really guilty, and are ſo accounted by him; we all had beſt ſtop our Mouths, and own the Sentence juſt, by which we ſtand condemned; while it is a Time of Mercy: for who can tell but God may pity us?

There is but one Way now left to evade the Force of what has been ſaid. To a ſtrict Demonſtration, the Law is not, and cannot be abated: there is now no Way therefore but to deny that there *ever was ſuch a Law.* But then, if God be what I ſuppoſe him to be, to a Demonſtration the Law muſt be ſuch too. There is no Way therefore, but to deny that there is *any ſuch GOD!* Well, but if God be not what I ſuppoſe; *what is he?* Why, we may ſee the whole Scheme, by the following *Objection*, in a few Words.

Obj. *God is a Being of infinite Underſtanding and almighty Power, perfectly diſpoſed to ſeek the Good and Happineſs of his Creatures, as his LAST END. He loves Virtue and rewards it, merely becauſe it tends to make them happy. He hates Vice and puniſhes it, merely becauſe it tends to make them miſerable. All he has in View, in his Commands and Prohibitions, in his Promiſes and Threatnings, is the Good, and nothing but merely the Good, of his Creatures. Yea, he eſteems Things to be virtuous, merely becauſe they tend to make us happy, and vicious merely becauſe they tend to make us miſerable. And now therefore, if we look upon Things as he does, and proſecute the ſame End; if we love and practiſe Virtue with a ſincere View to our own Happineſs, as our LAST END; we do all that God would have us do. And how can we, if we weigh Things, but moſt heartily and ſincerely love ſo good a God, ſo kind a Father, who ſo dearly loves us, and ſo tenderly ſeeks our Good?*

Ans. True, if God were verily *ſuch a one*, the moſt wicked Man in the World could not but love him. Self-love would make it natural. Even *Publicans* love thoſe, who love them; and are good to thoſe, who are kind to them. *Mat. 5.* Did Men firmly believe God to be ſuch a one, they could not indeed poſſibly be at Enmity againſt him. Self-love would not admit of it. Men would not need any *Grace* to make them love God: *Nature* would make them love him. They could not but love him, ſo long as they loved themſelves. And now if God indeed be ſuch a one, I readily own, there is no Truth in my whole Scheme; but, from

from first to last, it is all a Mistake. For it is altogether built upon a Supposition, that there is a God, *of a Temper essentially different.*

But then I would *Query*, if God be such a one, if he aims only at his Creature's Happiness, why does he ever inflict Misery upon them? If he means only to make them happy, why does he ever make them miserable? Why did he drown the *old World*, burn *Sodom*, and why does he damn Sinners to all Eternity?

It cannot be, because *Justice requires it.* For, upon this Scheme, *Justice does not require it.* For upon this Scheme Sin does, in strict Justice, deserve no Punishment at all.

A Crime deserves no Punishment, any farther than it is blame-worthy. A Crime is blame-worthy, no farther than we are under Obligations to do otherwise. According to their Scheme, all our Obligations to be virtuous result merely from its Tendency to make us happy. Upon their Scheme therefore, a Sinner is to blame for his Sins, merely because Sin is cross to his own Happiness, and tends to make him miserable. There is no other Evil in Sin but this. This is the only Reason why God hates it, is set against it, and disposed to punish it. This is the only Reason why he would have them avoid it. And this is the only Reason they are to Blame for it. No Man is blame-worthy for Sin, any farther than he was under Obligations to the contrary. All our Obligations to Virtue, according to them, arise from its natural Tendency to make us happy. And therefore all the Evil of Sin must arise from it's natural Tendency to make us miserable. This Misery, therefore, is exactly equal to the Evil of Sin. For *all* the Evil of Sin arises from it, or rather *consists* in it. This Misery is *all* the Evil of Sin; and this Misery is therefore *all* that renders Sin blame-worthy. *i. e.* I am to blame for taking a Course that tends to make me miserable. And why? Merely because it tends to make me miserable. For that Reason, and for no other. Therefore I am so much to Blame, and no more for what I do, than according to the Degree of it's Tendency to make me miserable. This Misery therefore, which naturally results from what I do, is equal to my Blame. And is therefore the *worst*, and *all* that I deserve.

For no Crime deſerves to be puniſhed, any farther than it is blame-worthy * And from the whole, to a Demonſtration, it follows, that upon their Scheme, Sin deſerves no inflicted Pain or Miſery, by Way of Puniſhment; over and above the Pain or Miſery which reſults neceſſarily from its own Nature. And now if Sin does not deſerve any ſuch Puniſhment, then Juſtice does not require the Governour of the World to inflict any ſuch, upon any of his Creatures, tho' ever ſo ſinful. For Juſtice does not require him to inflict a Puniſhment that is not at all deſerved. Yea, rather it ſeems Cruelty ſo to do. If therefore Juſtice did not require it, why did God drown the *old World* and burn *Sodom*, and why does he damn Sinners to all Eternity?

Certainly, He did not *aim at their Good*, when he drowned the *old World* and burnt *Sodom*. And certainly, he cannot *aim at Sinners Good* in their eternal Damnation. There are ſome Calamities in this Life, which God might be ſuppoſed to ſend upon his Creatures for their Good; and indeed, all Things conſidered, they are well adapted to do them Good; yea, and are all made to work together for Good to them that love God, and may be numbred among their Mercies. But what ſhall we ſay, when God drowns a whole World, burns up ſeveral Cities, and damns to all Eternity Millions of his Creatures: Yea, and all for nothing, when they deſerved no Ill at his Hands, not the leaſt!

* OBJ. "But are we not, according to their Scheme, under Obligations "reſulting from the *Authority* and *Command* of God?"

ANSW. We are, according to their Scheme, under no Obligations to regard the *Authority* and *Command* of God at all; only, and merely, and purely, becauſe it is for our Intereſt ſo to do. As themſelves acknowledge.

OBJ. * But are we not, according to them *obliged*, to have regard to *our Neighbour's* Welfare?"

ANS. Only, merely, purely becauſe it is for our own Intereſt to do ſo. For according to them, all our Obligations to practiſe any Virtue, ariſe originally only from it's being for our own Intereſt. The Language of ſuch a Practice plainly is, that there is not one Being in the whole Syſtem worth regarding but my ſelf; *I am, and beſides me, there is no other!* I will regard none, but juſt to anſwer my own Ends: And ſo really and ſtrictly, regard none, but my ſelf. This is a *Religion* that will ſuit *Nature*; and in this Senſe may juſtly be called *natural Religion*.

least! *Where is his Justice now!* Yea, *Where is his Goodness!* Or what does he mean! What does he intend!

Certainly, He cannot intend to deal so severely with some of his poor Creatures, who never deserved any Ill at his Hands, merely for the *Good of others*, to fright and warn and deter them from Vice. For this would be *to do Evil, that Good might come:* Yea, this would be the Way rather *that Good might never come.* For how could any of his Creatures or Subjects, heartily love him or like his Conduct; while they behold Millions of their Fellow-Creatures suffering, for nothing at all, such infinite Pains, under his Hands! *Where is his Justice?* would they all cry: *And where is his Goodness?* They would hate him, and flee from him, and dread a Government so infinitely tyrannical. Indeed, to inflict a proper Punishment, in Case of just Desert, is a good Thing, tends to maintain Government, and make Men afraid of Sin, and stand in Awe of the great Lawgiver and Judge of the World. Yea, 'tis a beautiful Conduct, and tends to make God appear amiable in the Eyes of all holy Beings. *Rev.* 19. 1,—6. But to afflict and torment poor Creatures, who do not *at all* deserve it, and that for ever, cannot possibly answer any good End; but, of Necessity, must promote a Thousand bad ones, when all the Time the true State of the Case is publickly known and understood throughout all God's Dominions. It is just as if a Father, who has ten Children, should hang up five every Monday-Morning, and whip them almost to Death, for nothing in the World, but to make the rest love him, and be good and obedient Children. And would they love him e'er the more for this? Yea, they could not but hate so cruel a Tyrant. Now, therefore, if their Scheme be true, why did God drown the *old World*, and burn *Sodom?* And why does he damn Sinners to all Eternity?

Yea, if Sin deserves no inflicted Punishment, as upon their Scheme it does not; why does God ever once inflict the least, the very least Punishment for it, in all his Dominions? And that, which tho' not in its own Nature more unaccountable, yet is more surprizing; why has God, all along, from the beginning of the World, been inflicting such

ſuch a dreadful Train of Puniſhments for Sin? Why did God turn the *Angels* out of Heaven for their firſt Sin, and doom them to an eternal Hell? when they did not at all deſerve it. Why did God threaten *Adam* with Death in Caſe of Diſobedience? Why is Death ſaid to be the Wages of Sin? Why did God cauſe the Earth to open and ſwallow up *Korah* and his Company? Why did God cauſe the Carcaſes of ſix Hundred Thouſand to fall in the Wilderneſs? Why did God ſtrike *Uzza* dead? And why a Thouſand more Things, which have happened in the Sight of the World? Surely, it can't be for *our Good*, to be ſtruck dead and ſent to Hell. And ſurely, it can't be for the *Good of any* in all God's World, that ſhall ſee or ever hear of it: when, all the while it is publickly known, that we deſerve no Ill at God's Hands. No, not the leaſt.

And now after all, to torment us in Hell for ever, for nothing in the World, *where the Fire ſhall never be quenched, and the Worm ſhall never die*; yea, and to appoint a Day of Judgment, under a Pretence of doing nothing but ſtrict Juſtice; and to ſummon all Worlds together, to ſee and hear, to the End that his Impartiality and Juſtice might appear to all: When, all the while, he knows, and all the World knows, that his poor Creatures deſerve no Ill at his Hands: No, not the leaſt! *What can he mean?*

Yea, and that which is a great deal worſe than all, that I even ſhudder to think of it; he not only makes a Law, to puniſh Sinners eternally in Hell, when there was no Grounds for it, and puts it in Execution upon his poor Creatures who do not deſerve it: But, having one only Son, of equal Glory with himſelf, he delivers him to Death, in the Room and Stead of Sinners; pretending that Sin was ſo bad a Thing, *that without the ſhedding of Blood there could be no Remiſſion*, and therefore his own Son muſt die, to the End *he might be juſt, while he juſtified the Sinner that ſhould believe in him*: While, all the Time, if their Scheme is true, he knew, and all the World will know, ſooner or later, that Sin never deſerved the leaſt Puniſhment at his Hands!

To conclude, therefore, If God be what they ſuppoſe, I grant, the Scheme I have laid down is not right. And it is equally evident, that the *Bible* is not right neither. For the

the *Law* and the *Gospel*, the *old Testament* and the *new*, every where suppose, and take it for granted, that Sin is an infinite Evil, deserves the Wrath and Curse of God, all the Miseries of this Life, and Death it self, and the Pains of Hell for ever. The *Law* threatens all this. According to the *Gospel*, Christ has died to redeem us from all this, as what we *justly deserve*. The *Bible* therefore, in a Word, supposes we deserve it all; but their *Scheme* supposes we do not. The God that made the *Bible*, has no Doubt of it; he made his *Law* upon this Ground, and upon this Foot he gave his Son to die, has appointed a Day of Judgment, and prepared a Place of Torment, *a Lake of Fire and Brimstone:* But *their God* is of quite another Mind, can see no such infinite Evil in Sin; yea, no Evil at all in it, but what results from it's Tendency to make us miserable. *Their God* therefore, is not *the God of Israel*, nor *the God that made the Bible*; and therefore is *no God*, is nothing but an Image framed in their own Fancy, suited to their own Hearts.

Besides, their *Idea of God* is contrary, not only thus to the general Tenour of Scripture, but also to many plain and express Declarations. (1.) 'Tis manifest, that God does not make the Happiness of his Creatures his *last End*, from *Exod.* 9. 16. *Num.* 14. 13.—21. *Lev.* 10. 3. *Psal.* 106. 8. *Ezek.* 20. throughout. *Ezek.* 36. 21,22,23. and 38. 23. and 39. 6, 7, 13, 21, 22. *Rom.* 9. 22, 23. *Rom.* 11. 36. *Rev.* 4.11.— (2.) 'Tis manifest, that God does not require his Creatures to love and obey him merely because it tends to make them happy so to do, from *Exod.* 20. 2. *Lev.* 19. 2. *Psal.* 29. 2. and 96. 4, 8. and 148. 13. 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. (3.) 'Tis manifest, that God does not threaten and punish Sin merely because it tends to make his Creatures miserable, from 1 *Sam.* 2. 29, 30. 2 *Sam.* 12. 7—14. *Psal.* 51. 4. *Mal.* 1. 6, 7, 8, 14.

But to conclude.—How sad and dreadful a Thing will it be, for poor Sinners, when they come to die, and enter into the World of Spirits, there to find that the God they once loved and trusted in, was nothing but an Image framed in their own Fancy! They hated the *God of Israel*, and hated his *Law*, and therefore would not believe that *God* or his *Law* were indeed what they were. They were resolved to have

have a *God* and a *Law* more to their Minds. How dreadful will their Disappointment be! How dreadful their surprise! They would never own they were Enemies to God; now they see their Enmity was so great, as to make them resolutely, notwithstanding the plainest Evidence, even to deny him to be what he was. And how righteous will the Ways of the Lord appear to be, in that he gave such over to strong Delusions to believe a Lie, who did not love, and would not believe, the Truth; but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness? 2 *Thes.* 2.10,11, 12. So the *Gentile Nations* not liking to retain God in their Knowledge, were given over to reprobate Minds, and left, every Nation, to make *such a God*, as best pleased themselves. *Rom.* 1.—— But it is Time to proceed to the next *Use*.

SECTION VI.

Rules of Trial.

USE II. Which may be *of Examination*. What has been said may serve to clear up to real Saints their gracious State, and may afford Matter of Conviction to others.

And here I would take the humble Believer in his Element, that is, in his Closet, where he retires from the Noise and Business of the World, where he loves to be alone, to read the Bible, to meditate on the Perfections of God, and think of his Works and Ways, where he mourns and prays and loves God and gives up himself to him.— In a serious Hour of sweet Retirement, when you are *most your self*, and your Thoughts most about you, I would enquire, *What are your Views? And what is the inward Temper of your Mind? And how do you live? And what is it that habitually influences you in your daily Conduct?*

Do you *know* God? Do you see him to be such a one as he really is? Even such a one as the Scriptures represent him to be? And do you account him infinitely glorious and amiable in being such a one? And do you begin to love him with all your Heart? Do you esteem him so, as to exult in his Supremacy and absolute Sovereignty? And so will his Glory and value his Honour and Interest,

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as to give up your self to live to him? And so delight in him, as to choose him for your present and everlasting Portion?——True, your remaining Blindness and Ignorance is very great: but do you not feel it, and groan under it as your Burden, and hate your self for it as your Sin, lamenting the Sottishness of your Heart, that you should be so senseless and brutish, after so many outward Advantages and inward Helps, and amidst such clear Manifestations made of God and of his infinite Glory in his Word and in all his Works and Ways; and feel that you are wholly to Blame for the Stupidity and Unteachableness of your Heart, ready to say with him of old, *So foolish am I and ignorant, I am as a Beast before thee?* Psal. 73. 22. Your Disesteem of God, and Unconcernedness about his Honour and Interest, is great, and you have still a Disposition to hate to live upon God only, without any Thing else to take Comfort in, as the Portion of your Soul; and so you are inclined to forget God, to forsake him, to depart and go away and fall in Love with something else, and seek another resting Place, and something else to take Comfort in: But do you not feel this your remaining Want of Conformity to God's Law, and native Contrariety to it? And do you not hate it, and hate your self for it? Do you not groan under it, and lament it, and watch and pray and fight against it, feeling the infinite Sinfulness of it? Saying, *The Law is holy, just and good; but I am carnal sold under Sin:— O wretched Man that I am!* Rom. 7. 14, 24.

And what are the *Grounds* of your Love to God, and from what Motives is it that you are influenced to love him? Does God indeed appear infinitely great, glorious, and amiable in being what he is? And do you love him because he is just such a one? Do you love to meditate his incomprehensibly glorious Perfections, and wonder and adore? Are you glad, that he knows all Things, and can do every Thing? Are the various Manifestations of divine Wisdom, in the moral Government of the World, glorious in your Eyes? Does it suit your Heart, that God governs the World as he does? Do you love, that the Pride of all Flesh should be bro't low, and the Lord alone be exalted? Are you glad, that God loves Righteousness and hates Iniquity as he does; and

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do you heartily approve the Strictneſs of his Law in the Matter of your Duty, and the Severity thereof againſt the leaſt Sin? And are you ſweetly ſenſible of the infinite Goodneſs of God, and of his Truth and Faithfulneſs? And does God appear infinitely Glorious becauſe he is juſt what he is? And is this the primary Foundation of your Love? In a Word, do you ſee him as the great Creator, Preſerver and Governour of the World, as the Redeemer, Sanctifier and Saviour of his People, as he has thus revealed himſelf by his Word and in his Works, and do you love him for being what he is? And do you alſo feel the powerful Influence of thoſe ſuperadded Obligations you are under to love him? In other Caſes, when we love any Thing, we know why we love it: So alſo do Believers know why they love the Lord their God.

And does it not appear to you infinitely *reaſonable*, that you ſhould love God with all your Heart, that you ſhould be wholly his, and wholly for him, and make him your All, while you behold his infinite Glory, his compleat Alſufficiency, his original, entire Right to you, and abſolute Authority over you? And does not his Law in requiring you to do ſo, appear to be infinitely right, perfectly holy, juſt and good, worthy to ſtand in full Force for ever, unabated and unaltered? And do you not ſee, that the leaſt Want of Conformity to this Law, or Tranſgreſſion of it, is infinitely Vile, and that a perfect Conformity thereto deſerves no Thanks: And do you not feel your ſelf wholly to Blame for your not being altogether ſuch as the Law requires? Hypocrites are generally very ignorant of the Law, in it's true Meaning and Strictneſs; and ſo are ignorant of their Want of Conformity unto it, and of their inward Contrariety to it. *Rom.* 7. 8,9. For otherwiſe all Hypocrites would know certainly that they have no Grace. But yet Hypocrites, at leaſt many of them, know ſomething about the Law and their Want of Conformity to it, and ſomething about their inward Contrariety to it; and hence may complain of the Blindneſs of their Minds, the Deadneſs of their Hearts, and of their Pride and Worldlineſs: But no Hypocrite is heartily ſenſible that the Law is holy, juſt, & good in requiring Perfection; and that he himſelf is entirely to Blame

Blame for not being perfectly holy, and that the Fault is wholly his. Some will say, "I desire to love God, and to "aim at his Glory, and do my Duty: but no Man is, or can "be perfect: And God does not require more of us than "we can do." And so they think themselves excusable, and are not sensible that it is infinitely vile in them not to love God with all their Hearts.—— Others will say, "I can do "Nothing of my self: it is Christ that must do all. I desire "to love God; but I can't. It is the Spirit that must "fill my Heart with Love, and God is the sovereign Dis-"penser of his Grace; so that if I am dead and dull and "senseless and stupid, I can't help it." And so they also think themselves excusable, and are not sensible that it is infinitely vile in them not to love God with all their Hearts.— But now, how stands the Case with you? Have you any secret Way of excusing your self? Or do you see that the Law is holy just and good, and that you only are to Blame, wholly to Blame, and altogether without Excuse; yea, and exceeding Vile, for all your Blindness and Deadness, and for every Thing wherein you are not just what the Law requires you to be? 'Tis this which makes Believers sensible of their Desert of Damnation, all their Lives long, and loath and abhor themselves before the Lord. And 'tis this which causes them more and more to see their Need of Christ and free Grace, and admire and prize the glorious Gospel. *O wretched Man that I am! Who shall deliver me? — I thank God thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.*—— Rom. 7. 24, 25.

And do you begin to be of a Disposition really to love your *Neighbour* as your *Self*? Be your Affections under the Government of a Spirit of disinterested Impartiality, so that you are disposed to value your self only for those Properties in you that are good and excellent, and only in Proportion to their Worth and Excellency; and by this Rule to esteem your Neighbours, your Friends, and your Foes, and all Men? And do you hate a contrary Disposition in you? And is your Heart full of Love and Kindness and Benevolence, wishing well to all, seeking the Good of all, and even grieved when your Enemies are in Adversity?

And to conclude, Does Love to God and to your Neighbour govern you in your Thoughts, Affections and Actions,

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and daily influence you to live to God, and do Good in the World; so that now you are not your own, but given up to God to do his Will, seeking his Glory?— A holy Life does as naturally proceed from a holy Heart, as a Stream does from a living Fountain.

Once you was Darkness: But are you now Light in the Lord? Once, as to right spiritual Views of God, your Neighbour, or your self, of this World or the next, you had none; you was blind, your Understanding was darkened; and so your Apprehensions were wrong, and you loved your wrong Apprehensions, & took Pleasure in Error, Falshood and Sin, and hated the Light, hated Truth and Duty: once you was wholly devoid of the divine Image, and destitute of all Good; yea, and you was wholly averse to God, and full of all Evil. And did you ever see and feel this to be your State? and have you by divine Grace been recovered out of it?—Have you been effectually taught, that your Light was Darkness, and your Knowledge Ignorance, and been made sensible of the Blindness of your Mind? And have you learnt, that all your seeming Goodness was Counterfeit? and that in you did dwell no good Thing? Yea, that your seeming Goodness was real Wickedness, in that your Heart was in perfect Contrariety to God and his Law? Has divine Light shined in your Heart, and your native Darkness, as well as contracted Blindness, been dispelled from your Soul; so that now your Views of God, of your Neighbour and your Self, of this World and the next, are right, and your Apprehensions according to Truth, and has the Truth made you free? Do you now look upon God, in some Measure according to the Capacity of a Creature, as he does upon himself, when he takes upon him the Character of most high GOD, supreme LORD, and sovereign GOVERNOUR of the whole World, and says, *I am the Lord, that is my Name, and besides me there is no other God?* And do you see it is infinitely fit that all the World should love, worship and adore him? Do you now look upon your Neighbours, in some Measure as God does, when he commands you to love them as your self; and so see that it is perfectly right that you should? And do you look upon your self and every Thing in this World,

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in some Measure as God does, when he commands you to deny your self, and forsake all Things for his Sake; and see that it is most fit and reasonable to die to your self and to this World, and give up your self to God, to love him and live to him, and delight in him for ever? And do you understand, that the Things which are seen are temporal, and that the Things which are unseen are eternal? And do all possible Troubles in the Ways of God, in some Measure, appear only as light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment, and not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed? Do you thus know the Truth, and has the Truth made you free from your old Servitude; and are you effectually influenced and governed by these Views and Apprehensions, and this Sense of Things, to bring forth Fruit to God, an hundred-fold, or sixty-fold, or at least thirty-fold? For divine Knowledge is efficacious, and the holy and divine Effects and Fruits are always equal to the Degree of Knowledge; (*1 Joh. 3. 6.*) *And every Branch which bringeth not forth Fruit, is cut off and cast into the Fire.* Are you thus born again, and become a new Creature, and learnt to live a new and divine Life?

And is it not now most manifest to you, that all this is so far from having been the Product of Nature, that all that is in Nature, every natural Propensity of the Heart, has from first to last been utterly against the Change, and made a constant and mighty Resistance? And do you not plainly perceive, that, from first to last, the Work has been begun and carried on by God himself?

And does it not appear to you, as the most astonishing Goodness in God, and owing to nothing but his sovereign free Grace, that you have thus been called out of Darkness into marvellous Light, turned from the Power of Sin & Satan to serve the living God? And do you not plainly see, there is nothing but the same infinite Goodness and free Grace to move God to carry on and compleat this Work in your Heart, and that so, if ever you get to Heaven, the whole of your Salvation, from first to last, will be absolutely and entirely to be attributed to free Grace? And have you not hence learnt to live upon free Grace thro' Jesus Christ for all Things?

And do you not perceive, that he, who has begun, does *actually* carry on the Work of Grace in your Hearts? And that all the external Dispensations of Providence and internal Influences of the Spirit concur in their Operation, to humble you and wean you from the World and imbitter Sin, to bring you nearer to God and to love him and to live to him and to live upon him, and to make you more serious, more spiritually-minded and heavenly-minded, more watchful and prayerful, and more loving and kind and tender-hearted and obliging to all Mankind, both Friends and Foes; and to make you daily attend upon the Duties of your particular Calling, and upon all the common Business of Life, as a Servant of God, in Singleness of Heart, doing Service to the Lord?

And altho' you was once *dead in Sin* and wholly without Strength, yet do you not now feel that you are spiritually alive, and so put into a Capacity for a spiritual Activity, and that you are engaged to be active for God? *Not that your Sufficiency is of your self*, as once you thought it was: For you *are not sufficient of your self, as of your self*; *but your Sufficiency is of God.* Yet do you not find that *thro' Christ strengthning of you, you can do all Things?* And do you not from the Heart hate the Way of lazy, dead-hearted Hypocrites, who sit still and carelessly cry, "We can do no-"thing, 'tis Christ that must do all," and under a Notion of not doing any Thing in their own Strength, gratify their Laziness, and do nothing at alll! Accursed Laziness! Accursed Hypocrisy! Do you not feel, I say, that you are put into a Capacity for spiritual Activity? And are you not engaged to be active for God? For you are *his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works*, that you might *walk in them.* While the Spirit of God is taking down the Power of Sin in your Heart, and slaying your Corruptions; are you not also *crucifying the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts?* While God is *working in you to will and to do*, are you not *working out your Salvation with fear and trembling*, with filial Fear and holy Concern? While the Spirit of God gives you *Might in the inner Man*, do not you *put on the whole Armour of God, and fight with Flesh and Blood*, with *Principalities and Powers?* This is the Way of Believers.

Believers. And the Spirit does not come upon them by Fits, as it did upon *Balaam*; but *dwells* in them and abides in them for ever; *to purify them from all Iniquity, and make them a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

Finally, Do you not experience that your Religion is something *real* and *perceptible*, and see that it is *specifically* different from any Thing that possibly can arise merely from a Principle of Self-love? You perceive your Views of God, and Sense of his Greatness, Glory and Beauty; and you perceive your Sense of the World's Emptiness, and of your own natural Vileness and Wretchedness; and your Love to God, your Weanedness from the World, and your Mourning for Sin are perceptible. And is it not easy to perceive why you love God, are weaned from the World, and mourn for Sin; namely, because God is infinitely lovely, the World empty and worthless, and Sin the greatest Evil? And while these Views and Affections effectually influence you to all holy living, their Genuineness is made still more evident and plain. And, from the whole, you arise to a rational and scriptural Knowledge of your gracious State.

From what has been said upon this Subject, a great Variety of other Questions might be put to the Believer; but the whole has been treated so plainly and practically, that I need add no more. And if graceless Persons, had it in their Hearts to be honest and impartial, they might easily know, that they are Strangers to real Religion. But if they have not the Thing itself, they will either work up something like it, or else deny that there is any such Thing: for *he that doth Evil, hateth the Light*; and so does he who has a rotten Heart. And hence some cry, "The best have "their Failings"; and they watch and catch at the Failings of such as are accounted godly, and dwell upon them, and magnify them; and so quiet their Consciences, and go on in their Sins. Others cry, "The best are dead sometimes"; and so maintain their Hopes, altho' they lie dead, whole Months and Years together, and live in Sin, and never come to sound Repentance. Others cry, "You will discourage weak Christians;" meaning themselves. Just as if there were a Sort of Christians that cannot bear

the Light, nor ſtand a ſcriptural Trial. What will they do, when they come before the awful Bar of the Heart-ſearching God! Others cry, "But every Chriſtian does not experience alike;" and ſo tho' they are deſtitute of the very Eſſence and Life of Religion, yet they hope all is well. And many are confident that theſe Things are not ſo, "for, ſay they, If theſe Things are true, who then ſhall be ſaved?" I anſwer, *Strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leads to Life; and few there be that find it: but wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leads to Deſtruction, and many go in thereat.* Mat. 7. 13, 14. And mark what follows in the next Verſe, ℣. 15. *Beware of falſe Prophets, which come to you in Sheeps-cloathing, but inwardly are ravening Wolves.* ℣. 16. *Ye ſhall know them by their Fruits.*— By what Fruits? Why, this is the conſtant Character of falſe Prophets throughout the Bible, that they cry, *Peace and Safety, and heal the Wound of poor Sinners ſlightily, and daub with untempered Mortar*, i. e. They make Religion to be an eaſier Thing than it is, more agreeable to corrupt Nature; and ſo encourage Sinners to reſt in ſomething ſhort of true Grace. So the *Phariſees* did, notwithſtanding all their pretended Strictneſs; and ſo the *Arminians* do, notwithſtanding all their ſeeming Zeal for good Works; and ſo the *Antinomians* do, notwithſtanding all their Pretences to extraordinary Light and Joy and Zeal and Purity and Holineſs. And this is the common Character of all falſe Prophets and falſe Teachers and Hereticks, that, being Enemies to true Religion, they cut out a falſe Scheme in their Heads, to ſuit their own Hearts; and ſo, however greatly they may differ in many Things, yet herein all agree, to make Religion an eaſier Thing than the Bible does, and to make the Gate wider and the Way broader than Chriſt and his Apoſtles; and by this *Mark* the difference between them and the true Prophets may always be certainly known. And therefore Chriſt having juſt ſaid, *Strait is the Gate and narrow the Way* &c. immediately adds, *Beware of falſe Prophets, by their Fruits ye ſhall know them*; for they all invent ſome eaſier Way to Heaven, tho' it may be *in Sheeps cloathing*, i. e. under a Shew of *great Strictneſs*. And this their Invention being *falſe*, they are thus denominated

nated *false Prophets.* And thus what has been said concerning the Nature of true Religion, may serve to clear up the Believer's gracious State; and may afford Matter of Conviction to others.

Section VII.

We have great Reason to be humble, and thankful, and live intirely devoted to GOD.

USE III. *Of Humiliation.* What has been said may be improved by *Sinners* and *Saints* to promote their Humiliation: For by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin; and a Sight and Sense of our Sinfulness, tends to abase us before the Lord.

In this Glass of the *Law*, *Sinners* may see what they be in Heart and Life, and by this Rule they may learn *how* God looks upon them. There is a Knowledge of our selves, of our Hearts and Lives, that is *natural* to us. Men, by their Power of Self-reflection, have a Sort of an Acquaintance with themselves: they know their present Views and Designs, their present Inclinations and Way of Living; and remember, more or less, how they have lived in Years past. But Men are naturally very ignorant of the Nature of God and of his holy Law; and so are very ignorant of themselves in a *moral* Sense, are very insensible *how* God looks upon them, and what their Hearts & Li es be, compared with God and his holy Law. *Natural Conscience* has some Notions about Right and Wrong, and so does something towards accusing and condemning Men, especially for their grosser Sins; but natural Conscience is for the most Part so blind and so much asleep, and in most Men has been so much abused and brow-beat and kept under, that it lets Men pretty much alone. Men *hold the Truth in Unrighteousness*, according to the *Apostle*'s Phrase, and keep their Consciences in Chains; and so are in a great Measure *without the Law*; and hence *Sin is dead:* for *where there is no Law, there is no Transgression:* and when Men know not the Law in it's true Meaning and Extent, they are insensible how

they swerve from it, and how contrary they be to it, and how sinful Sin is: But *when the Commandment comes, Sin revives.*

Think of this therefore, O Sinner, that the infinitely glorious God, your Creator, Preserver and Governour, deserves to be loved and lived to and delighted in with all your Heart; and that this is what he requires at your Hands; and know it, he hates your hypocritical Shews and Pretences, so long as that in Heart, he sees, you are an Enemy to him. You may pretend, that you can't help your Hearts being so bad; but God knows, you love your Corruptions, and hate to have them slain, and love to have them gratified. You love to be proud, and hence you love to be applauded: and the Praise of Men is sweet, and of greater Price with you than the Praise of God; you will do more to please the World, than to please God; yea, will displease God, to keep in with a wicked World, who hate God; and God knows it. You love to love the World; and hence love to lay worldly Schemes, and are secretly ravished with worldly Hopes when Things are likely to go well, and account no Pains too great in worldly Pursuits; but you hate to pray in secret, have no Heart for God, can take no Delight in him: and God knows it. And will you now pretend, for your Excuse, that you can't help your Heart's being so bad; whenas it is *you your self* that are so bad, and love to be so bad, and hate to cease to be what you are. If God has by his Spirit awakened your Conscience a little and terrified you with the Fears of Hell and Wrath, it may be, your Corruptions are somewhat stunned, and Honour and worldly Gains do not appear so tempting, and you are ready to say, that you would willingly part with your Reputation and every Thing you have in the World, for an Interest in Christ and the divine Favour; and now you think you are sincere: But God knows, it's all Hypocrisy; for he sees, you do not care for Him, but are only afraid of Damnation. And God knows, that if once you should get a false Confidence of Pardon and the divine Favour, you would soon return to Folly, as the Dog to his Vomit, and set out after the World as eagerly as ever; or else vent your Corruptions in spiritual Pride, and

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in ranting Enthusiastick Wild-fire and Party selfish Zeal, as Thousands have done, who once felt just as you do now. God therefore does not mind your Pretences, nor believe your Promises, for he knows what you are. You may deceive your self, but can't deceive him. He knows, your Corruptions are stunned, but not mortified; and that your Nature is just what it was, and you, as really, an Enemy to God as ever. And it may be, *you* may see it yet, when you come to find out *how* God looks upon you, and upon your Prayers and Tears and Promises; for it's commonly the Case with Sinners, when they perceive that God is not pleased with their devout Pretences, and does not design to save them for their hypocritical Duties, by the secret workings of their Hearts to discover that they care only for themselves, and are real Enemies to God and his Law. Love to God, O Sinner, is not begotten by the Fears of Hell, nor by the Hopes of Heaven. If you do not love God for what he is in himself, you do not love him at all; but only flatter him with your Lips and lie unto him with your Tongue. But it may be manifest to you, that you do not love him for what he is in himself; because you do not love his Law which bears his Image. You do not like the Law as a Rule for you to live by, for it is too strict for you. And you do not approve of the Law as a Rule for God to judge you by, for you think it hard for God to damn Men for the least Sin. Know it, therefore, O Sinner, that there is not any Good in you, or any Goodness in your Duties; but you are in a State of Rebellion, an Enemy to God and to his holy Law: and come down and lie in the Dust before the Lord, and own the Sentence just by which you stand condemned, and be quiet at his Feet; and if ever he saves you, for ever attribute it wholly to free and sovereign Grace.—*When the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died.*

And such a one was you, O Believer; and in some Measure you are such a one still; and in some Respects your Sins are a great deal more aggravated. Oh never forget the Days, and Weeks, and Months, and Years you have formerly spent in Sin! *Once I was a Persecutor, and a Blasphemer, and Injurious*, says St. *Paul*; and his Heart

bleeds afresh, and he sets himself down for the *chief of Sinners*. 1 *Tim.* 1. 13, 15.

But what be you now, after all the Grace of God, after all the kind Methods Heaven has taken to reclaim you, and what are your Attainments, if you compare your Self and Attainments with the holy Law of God in it's spiritual Nature and divine Strictness? Do you feel such a Heart towards the great and glorious Governour of the whole World, as becomes you? Think, what a God he is, and how Angels and Saints on high love him. Think of his Majesty and Greatness & Glory & Excellency, and how he is the Fear & Delight & Joy of all Heaven. Think of his original and entire Right to you, and absolute Authority over you. Think of the Vileness of your Apostacy, and of the Depth of your Ruin. Think of redeeming Love. Think of converting Grace. Think of the many Means God has used with you in his Providence & by his Spirit. Think of all his Loving-kindnesses and tender Mercies.—And, think, what a Beast be you before the Lord! Lie down in the Dust, and cry and mourn and weep, and let your Heart break! Oh, your want of Love to God, of Zeal for his Glory, of Delight in his Perfections, and of Gratitude for all his Kindness! Alas, how you disesteem the God that Angels love, and comparatively despise the GOD that all Heaven adores! Alas, how careless you be about his Honour and Interest, and how inactive in his Service! Alas, how you disrelish the Fountain of all Goodness and the Ocean of all Blessedness, and hanker after other Things, and go away from God to seek Rest elsewhere, and thereby cast infinite Contempt upon the Delight of Heaven and the Joy of Angels, the ever-blessed & alsufficient God! Think of the peculiar Obligations, God has laid you under by all the secret Ways of his Providence & Grace with you, & of all the infinite Pains he has taken with you to make you humble, weaned from the World, devoted to God, loving, kind, tender-hearted, friendly & obliging to all Mankind, and universally holy; and see and say, Was ever Wretch so vile! Did ever Wretch treat such a God, in such a Manner, under such Circumstances! Oh, how far, how infinitely far you are, from

from being what you ought to be! This made St. *Paul* account himself *less than the least of all Saints, and forget the Things that are behind:* his Attainments dwindled away, as it were to nothing, when he compared himself with God's holy Law, and thought what he ought to be, and what Obligations he was under; and he did therefore, as it were set down all that he had hitherto attained for nothing, and feel and act as if he was but just now beginning to live to God. Rom. 7. 14. *The Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under Sin.* Ver. 24. *O wretched Man that I am!* Phil. 3. 13,14. *I forget the Things which are behind, I reach forth towards those Things which are before, I press towards the Mark.* And, O Believer, go you, and do likewise.

Besides, remember, that it is no Thanks to you that you are not to this Day secure in Sin: Yea, that you are not one of the vilest and profanest Creatures in the World. Your Nature was bad enough; the Seeds of every Sin were in your Heart; but for restraining or sanctifying Grace you might have been as bad as any in *Sodom.* And what was it moved God to awaken you, and stop you in your Career in Sin, and turn you to God? Was it for your Righteousness? Oh, be ashamed and confounded for ever! For his own Sake he has done it, when you was a stubborn, stiff-necked, rebellious Creature. And truly, what has been your Carriage towards the Lord, compared with the exact Rule of Duty, the holy Law of God, since the Day you have known him? O remember *Massah* and *Taberah* and *Kibroth-hataavah*, and how you have been rebellious against the Lord, ever since he has taken you in Hand to subdue you to himself. (Read *Deut.* 9. and see how much your Temper has been like theirs.) And this notwithstanding all the Signs and Wonders God has wrought before your Eyes: I mean, notwithstanding all the sweet and awful Methods God has taken with you, to make you know him and love him and fear him and live to him. There are Thousands and Thousands that God never took any such special Pains with. Their Sins are not like yours. Come down therefore, sit in the Dust, mourn and weep, and loath and abhor your self, as long as you live; and ascribe

cribe all Praise to God, thro' whose Grace alone it is, that you be what you be.

Let me here address you in the Words of the famous Mr. *Hooker*. " That thou mayest for ever, each Day that passeth " over thy Head, remember it to the Lord, and leave it " upon Record in thine own Connscience; say, Hadst " thou (blessed Lord) given me the Desires of my Heart, " and left me to my own Will, it is certain I had been in " Hell long before this Day, when in the Days of my Folly " and Times of my Ignorance, when out of the desperate " Wretchedness of my rebellious Disposition, I was run- " ning Riot in the Ways of Wickedness, *When I said to the* " *Seers, see not, and to the Prophets, prophesy not*, to Chris- " tians, to Acquaintance, to Governours, admonish not, " counsel not, reprove not, stop me not in the pursuit of " Sin. The Time was, *I took hold of Deceit and refused to* " *return*; nay, resolved in the secret Purpose of my Heart, " *I would none of thee*; I would not have that Word of " thine reveal or remove my Corruptions; I would none " of thy Grace that might humble me and purge me, none " of that Mercy of thine that might pardon me, none of " that Redemption of thine that might save me. Hadst " thou then taken me at my Word, and given me what I " wished, and sealed my Destruction, saying, Be thou for " ever filthy, for ever stubborn, and for ever miserable; " thou wouldest neither be holy nor happy, thou shalt " have thy Will, Sin with Devils and take thy Portion " with Devils; Lord, it had been just with thee, and I " justly miserable. But to bear with all my Baseness, to " put up all those Wrongs and Provocations, to strive " with me for my Good, when I took up Arms against " thee, and strove against my own Good; nay, when I re- " sisted Mercy; and then to take away that Resistance, and " to cause me to take Mercy, and make it mine, when I " used all the Skill I could to hinder my own Salvation: " Oh! The Height, the Depth, the Length, the Breadth of " this Mercy!——When we feel our Hearts to be puffed " up with the vain Apprehension of our own Worth, Parts " or Performances, what we are, and what we do; look " we back to our first Beginnings and judge aright of our

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" own Wretchedness and Nothingness, yea, worse than
" Nothing, in that we not only wanted all Good, but we
" had it within us to oppose allGood; and that will cause
" us to sit down in Silence abased for ever. When empty
" Bladders are grown unto too great Bulk and Bigness, to
" prick them is the readiest Way to lessen them; when
" our empty and vain Minds swell with high Thoughts,
" and high overweening Conceit of our own Worth, learn
" we to stab and pierce our Hearts with the righteous
" Judgment of our own natural Vileness, which will (or
" at least may) let out that frothy Haughtiness that lifts
" us up beyond our Measure: Tell thy Heart, and com-
" mune with thy Conscience, and say, It is not my good
" Nature, that I am not roaring amongst the Wretches of
" the World in the Road and broad Way of Ruin and
" Destruction, that I am not wallowing in all Manner of
" Sin with the worst of Men. It is not my good Nature;
" no thank to any Thing that I have, that I am not upon
" the Chain with Malefactors, or in a Dungeon with
" Witches; for whatever Hell hath, it is in this Heart of
" mine naturally, a *Cain* here, a *Judas* here, nay a *Devil*
" here. The Time was (O that with an abased Heart I
" may ever think of that Time) I never looked after the
" spiritual Good of my Soul, or whether I had a Soul or
" no; what would become of me and it, was the least of
" my Care, the furthest End of my Thoughts; nay, loth
" was I to hear of, or know these Things; when they
" were revealed, unwilling to receive them, or give Way
" to them when they were offered: how did I stop mine
" Ears, shut mine Eyes, and harden my Heart? What
" Ways, Means, and Devices did I use and invent, to shut
" out the Light of Truth, to stop the Passage and Power
" of the Word, that it might not convince me, that it
" might not reform me, might not recall me from my
" evil Ways? How often have I secretly wished, that ei-
" ther the Word were taken out of the Place, or I from it,
" that it might not trouble me in my sinful Distempers,
" and when I had least Good I had most Ease, and took
" the greatest Content. Oh that such a Wretch should

" thus

" thus live, and yet live! To be thus sinful! O that I " might be for ever abased for it.*"

Thus the Law, as a Rule of Life, may be improved to theHumiliation of the People of God, in that it may serve to keep fresh in their Minds, their native universal Depravity, their former Wickedness, and to discover their remaining Sinfulness. And I may here observe, that it is Believers *peculiar Acquaintance* with the Law in it's true Meaning, Strictness and Purity, that is the Occasion of their *peculiar Acquaintance* with their own Hearts. And while the Law daily shews them what they be, it learns them more and more their Need of a Redeemer and Sanctifier, and daily puts them upon going to God thro' Jesus Christ for pardoning Mercy and sanctifyingGrace. The Law makes Way for the Gospel; and a Sense of Sin, Weakness and Unworthiness makes Christ and Gospel-Grace precious,and stirs up a Man to Repentance, Faith & Prayer. Deluded therefore, are those poor Souls that say, " We must not " look into our Hearts, nor labour after a Sense of our " Sins and Sinfulness; for that is legal, and tends to Dis- " couragement: but we must look only to Christ and free " Grace, and believe and rejoyce, and a Sense of the Love " of Christ will humble us." Just as if the great Business of Christ was, to keep Men from a Sight and Sense of their Sins; and just as if a Man could be truly humbled, without seeing what he is, compared with God and his holy Law.—— But poor Souls, they feel a legal, discouraged Frame always, when they have any Sight and Sense of their Sinfulness, and it damps their Faith (and if they were but thoro'ly sensible of their Sinfulness, it would kill their Faith) and Joy; and therefore they conclude,it is not a good Way to look into their Hearts, no Good can be got by it. But when they don't mind their Hearts, but look steadily to Christ and free Grace, (a fancied Christ!) firmly believing that all he has done and suffered is for them, and realizing the Matter to themselves, now they feel sweetly and joyfully; and therefore conclude, that this is the Way, the only Way, to get Good for their Souls: And hence grow mighty Enemies to the Law, to Self-Examination, to Sense of

* Mr. *Hooker's* Application of Redemption. Vol. I. Pag. 97,——100.

of Sin, &c. This is the Door, by which if any Man enters in, he will soon become an *Antinomian* and an *Enthusiast*.

But to proceed.

USE IV. *Of Thankfulness.* While the Law shews us what we be, it does at the same Time make us sensible what we deserve; while it discovers to us our Sinfulness, it makes us feel our Unworthiness of any Good, and Desert of all Evil: and while we feel our Unworthiness and ill Deserts, our Afflictions appear far less than we deserve, and our Mercies appear more in Number than the Sands, and the Kindness and Bounty of our God appears exceeding great, and we wonder at his Goodness and bless his holy Name. And thus the Law is of Use to promote Thankfulness.

God the great Governour of the World, in Testimony of his high Displeasure against Mankind for their Apostacy from him, has spread Miseries and Calamities all round the Earth: from the King upon the Throne, to the Beggar on the Dunghil, there is not one, but has a greater or lesser Share in the Troubles of Life; and many have their Days filled up with Sorrows. And now Murmurings arise all round this guilty World, and the general Cry is, "No Body "meets with such Troubles as I do, I am very hardly dealt with." But the Law teaches us, that God is holy in all these his Ways, and righteous in all these his Works; and that we are all punished far less than we deserve; and so our Complaints are silenced, and our Hearts quieted into a humble Submission, and it appears infinitely fit, a rebellious World should be full of Wo, that we might learn that it is an evil and bitter Thing to forsake the Lord.

But at the same Time, God the great Lord of all, out of his boundless Goodness thro' Jesus Christ, reprieves Mankind from the *threatned* Ruin, strews common Mercies with a liberal Hand all round the Earth, sends Rain and fruitful Seasons, and fills the Hearts of all, more or less, with Food and Gladness; and to some he grants his special Grace, makes them his Children, and intitles them to eternal Life. And thus *he is the Saviour of all Men, but especially of those that believe.* 1 Tim. 4. 10. Yet this Goodness of God is but little taken Notice of in the World. But the Law, while it discovers what we be, and how unworthy and

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Hell-deserving we are, makes us sensible of the Freeness and Riches of God's Grace in these his Kindnesses. For while we feel that Hell is our proper Due, every Thing that renders our Case better than that of the Damned, we shall accept as a choice Mercy, and as an Effect of free Grace; and so instead of being always in a murmuring and repining Disposition, we shall be always wondering at the Goodness, admiring at the Kindness of the Lord; saying with good *Jacob*, *We are not worthy of the least of all the Mercies, and of all the Truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy Servants.* Gen. 32. 10. And with the *Jewish* Church, *O give Thanks unto the Lord, for he is Good, for his Mercy endureth for ever.* Psal. 136. And we shall always find, that the more sensible we be of our Unworthiness and ill Desert, the more Cause we shall see for Thankfulness, let our outward Circumstances in this Life be what they will.

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USE V. In the last Place, Let all that has been said be improved by Way of *Exhortation, to excite and engage the People of God, more and more to renounce themselves, the World and Sin, and give up themselves to God, to love him and live to him and delight in him with all their Hearts for ever.*

You have seen what Grounds you have to do so, arising from God's infinite Greatness, Glory and Excellency; and you have been viewing your superadded Obligations: And is the Lord such a God, and is he your God and Redeemer, O how strongly are you bound to keep all his Commandments! And what is it, O Believer, that the Lord thy God requireth of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his Ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy Heart and with all thy Soul? And is there not in keeping his Commands a great Reward? Did you ever Taste such Sweetness, as in a Life of Devotedness to God! And have not your Wandrings from him cost you many a bitter and mournful Hour? O, how happy would you be, if once you could come to it, to have done with every Thing else and to be wholly the Lord's! Seriously consider these Things;

1. *That you can come to it, to have done with every Thing else, and be wholly the Lord's, at least in a vastly greater Degree*

gree, than ever yet you have. See *Phil.* 3. 13, 14. You actually already have God *working in you to will and to do. Phil.* 2. 13. He has always been, as it were, labouring to humble you, and wean you from the World, and bring you nearer to himself, to love him, live to him, and delight in him, ever since the Day you first came to know him, by the outward Dispensations of his Providence, and by the inward Strivings of his Spirit. He has always been *purging you, that you might bring forth more Fruit. Joh.* 15. 2. Yea, this was the very Design of Christ's coming into the World, that he *might deliver you out of the Hands of all your Enemies, and bring you to serve God, without Fear, in Holiness and Righteousness, all the Days of your Life. Luk.* 1. 74. And that he *might redeem you from all Iniquity, and purify you to himself, that you might be peculiarly his, and zealous of good Works,* Tit. 2. 14. And for this End, God has already taken, as it were, infinite Pains with you, and this is what he is continually urging you unto, and he declares that he is *readier to give you his holy Spirit, than earthly Parents are to give Bread to their Children,* and invites and encourages and commands you *to ask.* Matt. 7. 7. &c. And will you not now therefore arise and put on the whole Armour of God, and make your strongest Efforts to recover from Sin to God?

God the great King of Heaven and Earth commands you to do so; Jesus the kind Mediator invites you to do so; and the holy Spirit the Sanctifier is ready to help you. Arise therefore, and be of good Courage, for the Lord is with you. Did you ever stir up your self to seek after God in vain, or set about a Life of greater Seriousness, Watchfulness and Prayer, and find no Advantage by it? Or have you not always said in the Conclusion, that *it is good for me to draw near to God*; (Psal. 73. 28.) And condemned and hated your self for your former Slackness, and been ready to resolve from your inmost Soul, that you would *call upon the Lord as long as you live?* Psal. 116. 2.

And let me put it to your Conscience, do not you believe, that if now you would gird up the Loyns of your Mind, and quit your self like a Man, and be strong, that *thro' Christ strengthning of you, you may do all Things?* And shall

ſhall Careleſneſs or Stupidity, ſhall Lazineſs & Sloth, ſhall the Allurements or the Diſcouragements of the World or the Devil, now after all, hinder you? What! When you have been *redeemed, not with Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of the Son of God*, when your Priſon-Door is flung open, and your Chains knocked off, and you called and invited to come out into *the glorious Liberty of the Children of God*, and when God is actually ſtriving with you already, and ſtands ready to afford you farther Help, what now be hindered! What! And be hindered by Careleſneſs, Unwatchfulneſs, &c! What, ſhall the Saviour groan in the Garden, and die on the Croſs, and yet you lie ſleeping here! What, aſleep! What, content without God in the World! What, when the whole Army of Prophets, Apoſtles and Martyrs have faſted and prayed all their Days, and waded thro' a Sea of Blood at laſt! Methinks, you had better abandon every mortal Delight, *lay aſide every Weight and the Sin that more eaſily beſets you*, and mourn and weep, and watch and pray, and fight and ſtrive, as long as you live, than act ſo far beneath the Dignity and Character of a *Chriſtian*.

It is but a few in the World, that truly know God and the Way of Acceſs to him thro' Jeſus Chriſt, and are in a (ſpiritual) Capacity to live a Life of Devotedneſs to God and Communion with him: moſt Men are *dead in Sin. But you hath he quickened*, and *you are his Workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good Works*; and it is God's Deſign you ſhould *walk in them*: you that were without Chriſt and without God in the World, afar off, *are now brought nigh*; and you are no more *Strangers and Foreigners*, but *Fellow-Citizens with the Saints and of the Houſhold of God*: for this Cauſe I therefore beſeech you, *walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith you are called*. See this Argument enlarged upon in the 2d, 3d & 4th Chapters of the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, and your Duties ſtill more particularly delineated in the 5th & 6th.

2. Conſider, *That as your Caſe is circumſtanced, it is abſolutely impoſſible for you ever to find any other reſting Place but God, or ever take any ſatisfying Comfort of your Life, but in a Way of Devotedneſs to God & Communion with him.* The

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Case is not with you, O Believer, as it is with other Men. *You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth; therefore will I punish you for all your Iniquities*, said God to his ancient People. *Mic.* 3. 2. But the other Nations of the Earth might worship Idols and serve Wood and Stone, and go on and prosper, without being called to a present Account. And so it is as to particular Persons. Bastards, who have no Parents to own them and bring them up, may, as for any Restraints from parental Authority, do what they will. They that don't belong to God's Family, may live from Home as long as they please, and because they have no Interest in his House, may, in Respect of divine Permission, go and live where they please, may continue to lie out from God: But *whom the Lord loveth, he chastneth; and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth.* Heb. 12. 6. Hypocrites may lose their Religion, and lie dead whole Months and Years together, and return with the Dog to his Vomit, and take as much Comfort in the World and their Lusts as ever: But it is impossible that you should: You can never get your Conscience asleep as other Men's are, or your Heart content to lie out from God, or wring your self out of your Father's Hand, or get out of the Reach of his Rod.

Solomon once seem'd resolved to find another resting Place for his Heart besides God, and something else to take Comfort in, and he was under the best outward Advantages to make a thoro' Trial, that ever Man was; but he never did, and never could: But was always like a Bone out of Joint, or like the Needle of a Compass turned aside from its beloved Star. *Vanity of Vanities*, says the Preacher, *all is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.* And poor *David*, how was he pained with Anguish of Spirit, for the Sin whereby he provoked the Lord? Psal. 32. 3, &c. *While I kept Silence* (i. e. before *Nathan* came, who brought me to an open Confession, see ℣. 5.) *my Bones waxed old; thro' my roaring all the Day long. For Day and Night thy Hand was heavy upon me: My Moisture is turned into the Drought of Summer.* And never did a Believer depart from God to seek another resting Place, or go away from the Fountain of living Waters, to get something else to take Comfort in; but God *hedged up his Way with Thorns, and made a Wall that he could not*

find his Paths: So that altho' he *followed after his Lovers, he never overtook them*, and tho' he *sought them, he never found them:* But at last has been constrained to say, *I will go and return to my first Husband; for then was it better with me than now.* Hos. 2. 6, 7. His *Backslidings have reproved him*, and *his Wickedness has corrected him*, and *made him know*, to the breaking of his Heart, *that it is an evil and bitter Thing to forsake the Lord.* Jer. 2. 19. For as God *thus* dealt with the *Jewish* Church of old, so he does with every Believer; for all God's Dealings with them *were for Ensamples: And they are written for our Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the World are come.* 1 Cor 10. 11.

And this now being the Case, O Believer, and you having always by your own Experience found it so, will you notwithstanding forsake the Lord? What Fault, *What Iniquity do you find* in God, that you should forsake him? Has he been *a Wilderness unto you, or a Land of Darkness?* Or has he not been your Father, ever since the Day he took you by the Hand to lead you, even ever since the Day you first knew him? Or be you weary of Lightsome, of sweet and happy Days, and impatient to plunge your self into Darkness, Distress and Anguish? May you not expect, if you forsake him and go away from him, to seek another resting Place, and something else to take Comfort in as your Portion, that he will *strip you naked as in the Day that you was born*, and make you desolate, and a Terror to your self, and that his Anger will smoke against you, and his Hand lie heavy upon you? And then will you *mourn like the Dove in the Valley, and be troubled, and go bowed down greatly, and rore by Reason of the Disquietness of your Heart*, and wish a Thousand and Thousand Times that you had never forsaken the Lord. Read *Psal.* 38. *Jer.* 2d and 3d *Chapters.* and *Hos.* 2. Will you not therefore bid Adieu to all other Lords and Lovers, and cleave unto the Lord with all your Heart for ever? for this is your Wisdom, and this is your Life. Which brings me to add,

3. Consider, If you will have done with every Thing else, and give up your self to the Lord, to love him and live to him and be wholly his, *then God will be your God sensibly, and you will, in spiritual Respects, be one of the happiest Creatures*

in

in this World; a hundred Times happier than you could possibly be in the Ways of Sin; *you shall have an Hundred Fold in this present World, besides eternal Life in the World to come. If any Man love me*, says Christ, *and keep my Commandments, I will love him and manifest my self unto him:* And *I and my Father will come and make our Abode with him.* Joh. 14. 21, 23. *He that dwelleth in the secret Place of the most High, shall abide under the Shadow of the Almighty.* Psal. 91. 1. And God will be your *Dwelling-Place for ever.* Psal. 90. 1. While the Nations dash themselves in Pieces, and all the World is in Confusion, and while you pass thro' the Fire and thro' the Water, God will be with you; and he will always be your Light, Life, Peace, Joy, Glory & Blessedness, in this undone, dreadful World; & your Heart will be firm and fixed like *Mount Zion, that cannot be removed, but abideth for ever*; & nothing shall ever *separate you from the Love of God, neither Things present, nor Things to come, nor Heigth, nor Depth, nor Life, nor Death, nor any other Thing.* And God will certainly give you every Thing in this World that is best for you and most for his Glory, and you will not desire any more; and all the evil Things, you may pass thro', will sensibly work together for your Good. *Matt.* 6. 33. *Rom*, 8. 28,—39. *Psal.* 73. 25, 26.

And thus, you have, by Experience, always found, that God has dealt with you. I appeal, O Believer, to your own Conscience, that thus it has always been, whenever you have sensibly from the Heart renounced all other Things, and given up your self to the Lord, to love him and to live to him and to take Content in him, God has sensibly been a *God* and *Father* and *Portion* unto you, and has given you all Things, which (every Thing considered) you could desire, and sensibly made all Things work together for your Good; whence you have been many a Time ready to say, *That not a Word of all his Promises has ever fallen to the Ground.* And you have actually enjoyed a hundred Times more Comfort in the Service of God, in Devotedness to God and Communion with him, than could have been had in the Service of Sin.—— And will you not now therefore be intirely and for ever the Lord's? O how happy you might be! And what blessed Days you might enjoy!

4. And that which can't but touch a filial Heart, consider, That if you will thus be wholly the Lord's, to love him and live to him and delight in him and to do his Will, *God will be glorified thereby, it will be to his Honour in the World.* Joh. 15. 8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much Fruit.—But ye are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, a holy Nation, a peculiar People; that ye should shew forth the Praises of him, who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light.* 1 Pet. 2. 9. God has but a few Friends in the World. Many that pretend to be his Friends, are a great dishonour to him and disgrace to Religion. By their Means his Name is blasphemed, and his Ways are evilly spoken of. And in general, his Honour is every where trodden down in the Dust. And can you stand by unconcerned? Yea, can you look on without your Heart bleeding within you? O therefore, be serious, be humble, be meek, holy and heavenly, be Peace-makers and merciful, be kind and tender-hearted, condescending and obliging, and abound in every good Work; for you *are the Salt of the Earth*, and *the Light of the World:* O therefore live so, *as that your Father, which is in Heaven, may be glorified.* Mat. 5. 13—16.

To conclude, Will you not now therefore determine, from this Day forward, to be wholly the Lord's, and from this Day begin to live to God in better earnest than ever? God is ready to help you. You will, as to present Comfort, be undone, if you do not live to God; and Peace and Glory and Blessedness is before you, if you do; and God, even your God, will be glorified. And if you are now ready, by the Grace of God, to hearken unto this Advice, then take these two Directions.

1. *Lay aside every Weight, and the Sins which more easily beset you.* Heb. 12. 1. In a serious and sweet Hour, when you get alone and mourn and pray and give up your self to God, and think and resolve you will now be for ever the Lord's, you are wont, upon Self-Examination and a Review of past Times, to see and say, "This, that, and the other "Thing, has been the sinful Occasion, Time after Time, "of my losing a serious gracious Frame of Heart, and by "such and such sinful Means I have gradually lost a Sense "of divine and eternal Things, and so have wandered from

"God

" God, and laid a Foundation for Darkness and Sorrow.
" O my Carelessness! O that I had prayed more in secret!
" O that I had spent precious Time better, *&c. &c.*" These now are the Weights, and these the Sins, which easily beset you, and these you must lay aside for ever, if you design to be the Lord's indeed, and to make a Business of Religion to Purpose. But perhaps you will say, " My worldly Bu-
" siness, my necessary Cares, and the common Duties of
" Life, are sometimes the very Things, and these I ought
" not to lay aside, and what shall I do in this Case?"
I *answer*, That at another Time, the necessary Cares, Business and Duties of Life, you find to be no Hindrances at all; even at such Times when you do all out of Love to God and for God, with Singleness of Heart. If you will therefore but always go about the common Duties of Life in such a Manner, they will never be any Clog to you. What you have therefore to do in the Case, is not to lay aside that which is your Duty, but to lay aside your wrong Ends and Aims. And thus you must lay aside every Weight.—But,

2. If you design to be religious in good earnest, *then be careful to use all proper Means, and do every proper Thing, that has a Tendency to promote your spiritual Life.* Every *proper* Thing I say, to guard against those anti-scriptural Methods which Enthusiasts are wont to take, and by which, above all Things, their false Affections are promoted, but which have a direct Tendency to kill the divine Life. In a serious Hour of sweet Retirement, and in happy Days when you are nearest to God, and enjoy most Communion with him, and have your Senses most accurate to discern between Good and Evil, you are wont to see and say, " O how blessed I might be, if I did always keep in this
" narrow Way, which now lies open plain before me; if I
" were always serious, watchful, prayerful, always reading,
" or meditating, and looking to God, and keeping my Heart,
" and improving every precious Moment of my Time wise-
" ly for God," *&c.* Well, well, O Believer, this is the Way, walk in it; and you *shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, that bringeth forth his Fruit in his Season, whose Leaf never withers, and whatsoever* you *do shall prosper.* And after a few more Days and Weeks and Months and

Years ſpent in Prayer and Faith and Holineſs, in this your Pilgrimage-State, you ſhall come and ſit down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob* in the Kingdom of God, and dwell for ever with the Lord. Amen.

Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the Dead our Lord Jeſus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, thro' the Blood of the everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work, to do his Will, working in you that which is well pleaſing in his Sight, thro' Jeſus Chriſt: to whom be glory for ever and ever. AMEN.

True Religion delineated.

DISCOURSE II.

Shewing the Nature of the GOSPEL, and of a genuine Compliance with it.

JOH. III. 16.

For GOD so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.

The INTRODUCTION.

THE grand Question before us, is, *What is true Religion?* And this is the general Answer, *It consists in a real Conformity to the Law, and in a genuine Compliance with the Gospel.* What is implied in a real Conformity to the *Law*, has been already shewn in the former Discourse: and we come now to consider wherein a genuine Compliance with the *Gospel* does consist. From our Saviour's Mouth we had before a brief Summary of the Law; and now from our Saviour's Mouth we have a brief Summary of the Gospel, in these comprehensive Words, *God so loved the World*, &c.

Nicodemus came to him for Inſtruction, believing him to be a Teacher ſent from God. Our Saviour begins immediately to inculcate upon him, the Neceſſity of *Regeneration* and *Faith*. We are Sinners, are naturally *dead in Sin*; and therefore muſt be *born again*, be recovered to the divine Image in the Temper of our Minds, and ſo be made ſpiritually alive. We are guilty, we need pardoning Mercy at the Hands of the great Governour of the World; but he will grant it only thro' the *Mediator* he has appointed: in him therefore muſt we believe, on his Merits and Mediation muſt we depend.—— *Nicodemus* could hardly underſtand the Doctrine of the *new Birth*; and our Saviour intimates that the Myſteries of our Redemption by the Blood of Chriſt, were like to be ſtill more difficult to him. We can eaſily underſtand worldly Things, for they are agreeable to the Temper of our Minds, and ſuit the Guſt and Reliſh of our Hearts: but we are blind to Things ſpiritual and divine, are ſlow of Heart to underſtand them, they not ſuiting the Temper and Reliſh of our Hearts, and we being in a Diſpoſition to diſreliſh Things of ſuch a Nature. Therefore our Saviour obſerves to *Nicodemus*, ver. 19. *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, but Men love Darkneſs rather than Light, becauſe their Deeds are Evil.* We are in a State of Rebellion, at Enmity againſt God, and under his Wrath; and yet ready thro' our Darkneſs to flatter our ſelves that all is well; and ſo are ſecure and at Eaſe: Light is come into the World, diſcovering our Diſeaſe and our Remedy, but we love our Diſeaſe, & loath the Remedy; and therefore hate the Light and will not come to it. And thus our Saviour teaches *Nicodemus* wherein true Religion conſiſts, and points out the Averſion of Mankind unto it. Nor is there any Thing that will diſcover our Averſion ſo plainly, as to ſet true Religion in it's own Light; for when we ſee clearly what it is, we may perceive how we ſtand affected towards it: but otherwiſe we may be eaſily miſtaken; may imagine that we love true Religion, when indeed we only love the falſe Image we have framed in our own Fancy.— *Regeneration* and *Faith*, theſe two great Eſſentials, wherein all Religion radically conſiſts, are the Things our Saviour inculcates upon his

new

new Disciple. Christ loved to lay the Foundation well. He was not fond of Converts, unless their Conversion was sound. And indeed, all our Religion is good for nothing, if our Nature be not renewed; and all our Communion with God is but Fancy, if we are Strangers to Christ; for he is *the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no Man comes to the Father but by him.*——But to proceed to the Words of the Text, *God so loved the World*, &c.

GOD—i.e. God the Father, the first Person in the ever-blessed Trinity, who sustains the Dignity and Majesty of God-head, and is eminently *Lord of Heaven and Earth*, (*Mat.* 11. 25.) and prime Agent in the Works of Creation and Providence, in governing the World, in redeeming, sanctifying and saving of Sinners. *Rom.* 11. 36.—That there are three Persons in the God-head, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that these Three are one God, the Scriptures do abundantly teach. (*Mat.* 28. 19. 2 *Cor.* 13. 13. 1 *Joh.* 5. 7.) And this Doctrine we must believe, or we cannot understand the Gospel.——*How* they are *Three*, and *how* they are *One*, is not revealed, nor is it necessary for us to know: but that there are three Persons in the God-head and yet but one God, we must believe; and what Characters they sustain, and what Parts they act in the Affair of our Salvation, we must understand. — The Gospel represents *God the Father*, as sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, as righteous Governour of the World, as giving Laws to his Creatures, as revealing his Wrath against all Transgressions: He is represented as being injured and offended by our Sins, and concerned to maintain the Honour of his Majesty, of his Law and Government and sacred Authority: He is represented as having Designs of Mercy towards a sinful, guilty, ruined World; and as contriving and proposing a Method of Recovery: He is represented as one seated on a Throne of Grace, reconcilable thro' Jesus Christ, and seeking to reconcile the World to himself by Christ, ordering Pardon and Peace to be proclaimed thro' a guilty World to any and all who will return to him in the Way prescribed.— The Gospel represents *God the Son*, as being constituted Mediator by his Father, that in and by him he might open a Way to accomplish his Des

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ſigns of Mercy towards a guilty World, conſiſtent with the Honour of his Majeſty, of his Holineſs and Juſtice, of his Law and Government. His Father appointed him to the Office, and he freely undertook it. His Father ſent him into this World to enter upon the difficult Work, and he willingly came. *He was made Fleſh, and dwelt among us.* Here he lived, and here he died, in the Capacity of a Mediator. He aroſe, he aſcended into Heaven, and ſits now at his Father's right Hand, God-Man Mediator, exalted to the higheſt Honour, made Lord of all Things, and Judge of the World. And now we are to have Acceſs to God by him, as our Mediator, high Prieſt, Interceſſor and Advocate, who has made compleat Atonement for Sins in the Days of his Abaſement, and has now ſufficient Intereſt in the Court of Heaven. —— The Goſpel repreſents *God the Holy Ghoſt*, as being ſent of the Father as prime Agent, and by the Son as Mediator, in the Character of an Enlightner & Sanctifier: in order to bring Sinners effectually to ſee and be ſenſible of their Sin, Guilt, and Ruin, to believe the Goſpel, to truſt in Chriſt, and to return home to God thro' him. And it is his Office to dwell in Believers, to teach and lead them, to ſanctify, quicken, ſtrengthen and comfort them, & to keep them thro' Faith unto Salvation.— The *Father* is God by Nature, and God by Office: the *Son* is God by Nature, and Mediator by Office. The *Spirit* is God by Nature, and Sanctifier by Office. The *Father*, as Governour, Lawgiver, Judge and Avenger, has all Power in Heaven and Earth, in and of himſelf. *Matth.* 11. 25. The *Son*, as Mediator, derives all his Authority from the Father. *Matth.* 11. 27. The *Holy Spirit* acts as being ſent by them both, by the *Father* as ſupreme Governour dealing with a ſinful, guilty World thro' a Mediator; by the *Son* as Mediator negociating a Reconciliation between God & Man. *Joh.* 14. 16. — The *Father* maintains the Honour of the God-head, and of his Government, and diſplays his Grace, while he ordains that Sin ſhall be puniſhed, the Sinner humbled, and brought back to God, and into a Subjection to his Will, and in that Way be pardoned & finally ſaved. Sin is puniſhed in the *Son* as Mediator, ſtanding in the Room of the Guilty. And the Sinner is humbled, bro't back

back to God, and into a Subjection to his Will, by the *Holy Spirit*; and in this Way is pardoned and saved. And thus the *Son* and the *Spirit* honour the *Father* as supreme Governour, and all join in the same Design to discountenance Sin, humble the Sinner, and glorify Grace. Thus far briefly of the Doctrine of the Trinity. —— Right Apprehensions of God help us to understand the Law, and right Apprehensions of the Trinity will help us to understand the Gospel. Not how they are three Persons and yet but one God, the Manner of which is not needful to be known; but the Offices and Characters they sustain, and the different Parts they act in the great Affair of saving Sinners.— *God* (says the Text) *so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* i. e. God the Father, the great Governour of the World, whom we had offended by Sin—

So LOVED the World——— i. e. with a Love of Benevolence. Esteem us he could not; for we were worthless and vile: To delight in us, it was impossible; for we were altogether odious and abominable. But to have a Good-will towards us, or a Will to do us Good, this he might have, altho' we were sinful and guilty: Not indeed from any Motive in us; for if we were viewed, and our Temper and Circumstances considered, there was not to be seen one Motive to Pity, no, not the least; but every Motive to Indignation and Wrath. However, from Motives within himself, he might will to do us Good, notwithstanding our Sin and Guilt. The self-moving Goodness of his Nature did excite him, from the good Pleasure of his Will, to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace, to design Mercy towards a sinful, guilty, ruined World.—*God so loved the World.*

The WORLD——— i. e. all Mankind, all the Posterity of *Adam*. For what follows, is evidently true, of every Individual: *That he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.*

SO loved——— i. e. so inconceivably, so unspeakably.

That he GAVE his only begotten Son——— i. e. of his mere, pure Goodness constituted him to be a Mediator, appointed him to be a Redeemer and Saviour, to make Atone-

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ment for Sin and purchaſe divine Favours, and ſo to open a Way for Sinners to return to God with Safety, and for God to ſhew Mercy to them with Honour. *God ſo loved the World*, i.e. all the Race of *Adam*, that he *gave* his only begotten Son, immediately upon the Apoſtacy of Mankind; for then was *this Seed of the Woman* promiſed, (*Gen.* 3. 15.) that all, being *by Nature Children of Wrath*, might be prevented by divine Goodneſs. God ſaw *all* involved in Sin and Guilt and Ruin, by *Adam's* firſt Sin: And ſo he provided a Saviour for *all*; that *whoſoever believes in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life.*

Should not PERISH.——— He viewed all Mankind as ſinful and guilty, loſt, undone and periſhing, *i. e.* expoſed to the Wrath of God and Curſe of the Law, to all the Miſeries of this Life, to Death it ſelf, and to the Pains of Hell for ever. And he gave his only begotten Son to be a Saviour,———

That whoſoever BELIEVETH in him,——— i. e. that ventures upon his Atonement, his Worth and Merits, his Mediation and Interceſſion, for divine Acceptance; ſo as to be thence emboldened to return Home to God, upon the Invitation of the Goſpel.——That all ſuch ſhould not periſh,——— But

Have EVERLASTING LIFE——— i. e. the everlaſting Indwelling of the holy Spirit as a Sanctifier and Comforter, to be a never-failing Spring of a new, a ſpiritual and divine Life; everlaſting Union and Communion with Chriſt, and the everlaſting Favour and Enjoyment of God thro' him.

Thus we have in theſe Words a brief View of the glorious *Goſpel* of the bleſſed God. And from them we may learn, (1.) That God, the great Governour of the World, conſidered Mankind, as being in a *periſhing* Condition, *i. e.* ſinful, guilty, juſtly condemned, helpleſs and undone. (2.) That it was merely from *Motives within himſelf*, that he has done, what he has, for their Recovery out of this State. (3.) That he has conſtituted his *Son* a Mediator, Redeemer and Saviour, that thro' him Sinners might be *ſaved*. (4.) That he has appointed *Faith* in Chriſt, to be the Condition of Salvation.——Here therefore I will endeavour to ſhew,

I. Upon

I. Upon what *Grounds* it was, that God, the great Governour of the World, did consider Mankind, as being in a *perishing* Condition, *i. e.* sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless and undone.

II. What were the *Motives*, which excited him to do, what he has done, for their *Recovery*.

III. What *Necessity* there was of a *Mediator* and *Redeemer*, and how the Way to Life has been opened by him whom God has provided.

IV. What is the true Nature of saving *Faith* in Him. And so by the Whole, to explain the Nature of the Gospel, and of a genuine Compliance therewith.— And in the last Place,

V. Will consider the *Promise* of everlasting Life to those who believe.

Section I.

Shewing the Reasons *why God does in the Gospel consider Mankind as being in a* perishing *Condition.*

I. I am to shew *upon what Grounds it was, that God, the great Governour of the World, did consider Mankind as being in a* perishing *Condition*, i. e. sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless and undone.—— That he did consider Mankind as being in a perishing Condition, is evident, because he gave his only begotten Son, that *they might not perish* who should believe in him. If we were not in a perishing Condition, his giving his Son to save us from Perdition had been needless: and his pretending great Love and Kindness in doing so, had been to affront us; to make as if we were undone Creatures, when we were not; and as if we were much beholden to him for his Goodness, when we could have done well enough without it. And the more he pretends of his great Love and Kindness, the greater must the Affront be. So that, however we look upon our selves, 'tis certain that God, who sees all Things as being what they are, did actually look upon us, as in a

perishing

periſhing, loſt, undone Condition.— And if he conſidered us as being in ſuch a Condition, it muſt have been becauſe he looked upon us as ſinful, guilty, juſtly condemned and altogether helpleſs; for otherwiſe we were not in a periſhing Condition. If we could have helped our ſelves a little, we ſhould not have needed one to ſave us, but only to help us to ſave our ſelves: but our Salvation in Scripture is always attributed wholly to God; and God every where takes all the Glory to himſelf, as tho' in very Deed he had deſerved it all. (*Eph.* 1. 3—6. and 2. 1—9.) So that it is certain, God did look upon Mankind as being in a periſhing Condition, ſinful, guilty, juſtly condemned, and altogether helpleſs: and conſidering us in ſuch a Condition, he entered upon his Deſigns of Mercy and Grace; and therefore he every where magnifies his Love, and looks upon us as infinitely beholden to him, and under infinite Obligations to aſcribe to him all the Glory and Praiſe, even quite all. *That no Fleſh ſhould glory in his Preſence.*—— But *he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* 1 Cor. 1. 29, 31.

It is of great Importance therefore, that we come to look upon our ſelves as being in ſuch a periſhing Condition too; for otherwiſe it is impoſſible we ſhould ever be in a Diſpoſition thankfully to accept Goſpel-Grace, as it is offered unto us. We ſhall rather be offended, as thinking the Goſpel caſts Reproach upon human Nature, in ſuppoſing us to be in ſuch a forlorn Condition, as to ſtand in a periſhing Need of having ſo much done for us. As the *Jews* of old ſcorned it, when Chriſt told them, *If they would become his Diſciples, they ſhould know the Truth, and the Truth ſhould make them free.* They took it as an Affront, and were ready to ſay, "What! Juſt as if we were in Bondage! Indeed no. We "were never in Bondage to any Man. We have *Abraham* "to our Father, and God is our Father; but thou haſt a "Devil." *Joh.* 8. 31—48. They would not underſtand him, they were all in a Rage. And ſo it is like to be with us, with Regard to the Methods, which God has taken with us in the Goſpel, unleſs we look upon our ſelves as he does, ſo wretched and miſerable, ſo poor, blind and naked, ſo helpleſs, loſt and undone. It is the want of this Self-Acquaintance, together with a fond Notion of our being in a much

much better Case than we be, that raises such a mighty Cry against the Doctrines of Grace, thro' a proud, impenitent, guilty World.

And since God does thus look upon us to be in such a perishing Condition, and upon this Supposition enters on his Designs of Mercy and Grace, here now therefore does the Question recur,—— *Upon what Grounds is it, that he considers us as being in such a perishing Condition?*—— Grounds he must have, and good Grounds too, or he would never thus look upon us. If we may rightly understand what they be, perhaps we may come to look upon our selves as he does; and then the Grace of the Gospel will begin to appear to us, in the same Light it does to him. The Grounds then, are as follows.

1. God the great Governour of the World, does in the Gospel consider Mankind *as being guilty of* Adam's *first Sin*, and on that Account to be in a perishing Condition. *In Adam all died,* (1 Cor. 15. 22.) But *Death is the Wages of Sin:* (Rom. 6. 23.) Therefore in *Adam* all sinned. For *by one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin; and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned.* i. e. sinned in *Adam.* (Rom. 5. 12.) for (℣. 19.) *By one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners.* And accordingly *by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation.* And hence all are *by Nature Children of Wrath.* (Eph. 2. 3.)

Obj. *But how can we be guilty of* Adam's *first Sin? It was he committed it, and not we; and that without our Consent, and a long Time before we were born.*

Ans. *Adam*, by divine Appointment, stood and acted as our publick Head. He stood a Representative in the Room of all his Posterity; and accordingly acted not only for himself, but for them. His sustaining this Character rendered him a Type of Christ, the *second Adam*, who has laid down his Life in the Room and Stead of Sinners. And his being spoken of in Scripture as a Type of Christ with Respect to this Character of a publick Head, proves that he did actually sustain such a Character. (*Rom.* 5. 14.) And therefore as by the Obedience of *Christ*, many are made Righteous; so by the Disobedience of *Adam*, many are made Sinners. (℣. 19.) i. e. by the Imputation of Christ's Obedience

doom Believers

Believers become legally righteous; righteous in the Sight of God by Vertue of an eſtabliſhed Conſtitution; and ſo have the Reward of eternal Life: So by the Imputation of *Adam*'s firſt Sin, his Poſterity by ordinary Generation, became legally Sinners, Sinners in the Sight of God by Vertue of an eſtabliſhed Conſtitution, and ſo are expoſed to the Puniſhment of eternal Death, the proper Wages of Sin. Now it is true, we did not PERSONALLY riſe in Rebellion againſt God in that firſt Tranſgreſſion, but he who did do it was *our* Repreſentative. We are Members of the Community he acted for, and God conſiders us as ſuch; and therefore looks upon us as being legally guilty, and liable to be dealt with accordingly: And ſo on this Account in a periſhing Condition. But perhaps ſome will ſtill be ready to ſay, "And where is the Juſtice of all this?" Methinks the following Conſiderations, if we will be diſintereſtedly impartial, may ſet the Matter in a ſatisfying Light.

(1.) *That the original Conſtitution made with* Adam, *as to himſelf perſonally conſidered, was holy, juſt and good.*

(2.) *That if all his Poſterity had been put under the ſame Conſtitution, one by one, from Age to Age, as they came into Being, to act for themſelves, it had alſo been holy, juſt and good.*

(3.) *That it was, in the Nature of the Thing, in all Reſpects, as well for our Intereſt, that* Adam *ſhould be made our publick Head & Repreſentative, to act not only for himſelf, but for all his Poſterity, as that we ſhould each ſtand and act for himſelf ſingly; and in ſome Reſpects better.*

(4.) *That in ſuch a Caſe, God, as ſupreme Lord and ſovereign Governour of the whole World, had full Power and rightful Authority to conſtitute* Adam *our common Head and publick Repreſentative, to act in our Behalf.*—— Let us therefore diſtinctly conſider theſe Particulars.

(1.) It is to be noted, *the original Conſtitution made with* Adam, (Gen. 2. 17.) *as to himſelf perſonally conſidered, was holy, juſt and good,* as will appear if we conſider the Circumſtances he was under, antecedent to that Conſtitution or Covenant. For,

In the firſt Place, Antecedent to that Covenant-Tranſaction, he was under infinite Obligations from the Reaſon and Nature of Things, to love God with all his Heart and obey

obey him in every Thing. From the infinite Excellence and Beauty of the divine Nature, and from God's original, entire Right to him, as his Creature, and absolute Authority over him, as his Subject, did his infinite Obligation so to do, necessarily arise. It was fit, it was infinitely fit and right, that he should look upon the infinitely glorious God his Maker and Governour, as being what he was, and as having such a Right to him and Authority over him as he had, and that he should be *affected* and *act accordingly*, antecedent to the Consideration of any Covenant-Transaction. And no Doubt, this was actually the Case with him, before that Covenant was made; for he was created in *the Image of God*, (Gen. 1. 27.). And so his Heart was full of a Sense of his Glory, and of admiring and adoring Tho'ts: He felt that he was not his own, but the Lord's; and he loved him and was entirely devoted to him, in the Temper of his Mind, conscious of the infinite Obligations he was under thereto.—— And farther, 'tis certain that God was the sole Lord and Owner of this lower World, and all Things in it; and that *Adam* had no Right to any Thing but by a divine Grant.——And 'tis certain, it was fit that *Adam* should be put into a *State of Trial*, and that God had Authority to do it.

And now since he was naturally under such infinite Obligations to love and obey God his Maker, God the supreme Lord and sovereign Governour of all Things; since he had no Right to any of the Trees of the Garden, but by the free Grant of God; and since it was fit he should be put into a State of Trial, and God had Authority to do it: Since these Things were so, it is evident, that Constitution was HOLY, *In the Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* God had a Right to make such a Law; for *Adam* was his, and all the Trees in the Garden were his, and he was by *Nature* GOD, SUPREME LORD AND SOVEREIGN GOVERNOUR of the whole World, and it was fitting he should act as such: And it was infinitely fit that *Adam* should have a sacred Regard to his Authority in all Things, *because he was such*; and that his eternal Welfare should lie at Stake, and be suspended upon his good Behaviour.——And no Doubt *Adam*, viewed Things thus, and

was thoro'ly ſenſible that God had a Right to prohibit that Tree upon Pain of Death, and that he was under infinite Obligations to have a moſt ſacred Regard to his Will in that Matter. Thus that Conſtitution was *Holy*.

And if we conſider, *in the next Place*, that, as has been obſerved, *Adam* was under infinite Obligations to love God his Maker with all his Heart, and obey him in every Thing, reſulting from the very Reaſon and Nature of Things, it will appear that the *Threatning was juſt*; and no more than what he muſt have expected, had he fallen into any Sin whatſoever, antecedent to any Conſtitution at all.—*Adam*, in a State of *pure Nature*, i. e. *prior to any Covenant-Tranſaction*, was under infinite Obligations to perfect Love and perfect Obedience; the leaſt Defect therefore muſt have been infinitely ſinful; and ſo by Conſequence muſt have deſerved an infinite Puniſhment. And it was meet that God the Governour of the World ſhould puniſh Sin according to it's real Deſert: in the Nature of Things it was meet, antecedent to any expreſs Declaration of his Deſign to do ſo. And *Adam* knew all this. He knew what Obligations he was under to God, to love him with all his Heart and obey him in every Thing; and by Conſequence, he was conſcious to himſelf that the leaſt Defect would be an infinite Evil, and ſo would deſerve an infinite Puniſhment; and he knew that it was the *Nature of God* to render to every one according to their Deſerts: he was certain therefore, from the Reaſon and Nature of Things, antecedent to that Threatning, that the leaſt Sin would expoſe him to an infinite Puniſhment.—— From this View of the Caſe, it is plain, that *that Threatning was juſt*, and *Adam* did moſt perfectly approve of it as ſuch.—— It was no more than it was reaſonable for *Adam* to expect, and meet for God to inflict, for any Tranſgreſſion of the Law of Nature. And it was againſt the Law of Nature, for *Adam* to eat the forbidden Fruit, when once God had ſaid, he ſhould not. It was a practical denying of God's Supremacy, and caſting off his Authority, and an actually ſetting up of his Will againſt the Lord's. If any Sin therefore deſerved an infinite Puniſhment, ſurely that did.

Remark.

Remark. And here by the Way, from this View of the Case, we may gain a certain Knowledge of what God meant by, *Thou shalt surely die*; or as it is in the Original, *In dying thou shalt die*; and may be certain how *Adam* understood it. —He did not mean, that *Adam* should be *annihilated*; for such a Punishment was not equal to the Crime. He might without Injustice have *annihilated Adam*, had he remained innocent; for he that gives Being of his mere good Pleasure, may of his mere good Pleasure take it away again. Nor could *Adam* have brought God into Debt by a thousand Years perfect Obedience; for he owed himself and all he could do, to God his Maker. *Rom.* 11. 35.——God meant to punish *Adam* according to his Deserts; but *Annihilation* would not have been such a Punishment: And therefore it is certain that this was not what God meant. *Adam* knew that Sin was an infinite Evil, and so deserved an infinite Punishment, and that it was meet it should be punished according to it's Deserts, and that it was the Nature of God to do so; but *Annihilation* was not such a Punishment, and *Adam* could not but know it: And therefore *Adam* could not understand *Death* in this Sense.—— God meant to punish *Adam* according to his Deserts. And what did he deserve? Why, an infinite Punishment, i. e. to have all Good taken away, and all Kinds of Evil come upon him *for ever*. Well, what Good had *Adam* in Possession! Why, he had a *natural Life*, resulting from the Union of his Soul and Body, with all the Delights and Sweetnesses thereof: And he had a *spiritual Life*, resulting from the gracious Influences of the holy Spirit, and consisting in the Image of God and Sense of his Love, with all the Delights and Sweetnesses thereof: And he was formed for Immortality, and so was in a Capacity of *eternal Life* and Blessedness in glorifying God and enjoying of him. Here therefore he was capable of a *natural*, a *spiritual* and an *eternal Death*; to have Soul and Body rent asunder for ever, to be forsaken by the Spirit of God and given up to the Power of Sin and Satan for ever, and to have God Almighty become his everlasting Enemy.——— *All this* he deserved; and therefore God meant *all this*. All this he *knew* he should deserve; and therefore he could not but

understand the Threatning to comprehend all this. ——— Besides, that which makes it still more certain, that this was the Meaning of that first Threatning, is, that God has since very expressly threatned *eternal Death* as the Wages of the least Sin. *Rom* 1. 18. *Gal.* 3. 10. *Matt.* 25. 46. (And the Word DEATH it self is plainly used to signify *eternal Death* and Misery. *Rom.* 6. 23. *Rom.* 8. 13.) So that either *now* he means to punish Sin more than it deserves, or he intended *then* to punish Sin less than it deserved, or else *eternal Death* was what he always meant, by threatning *Death* as the Wages of Sin. If he means to punish Sin *now* more than he did *then*, it is too much *now*, or not enough *then*; both which are equally contrary to the Reason and Nature of Things, and equally inconsistent with the impartial Justice of the divine Nature, which always inclines him to render to every one according to their Deserts, nor more, nor less: And therefore *eternal Death* was intended in that first Threatning. But this by the Way.

And, *Lastly*, as that Constitution was holy and just, so also it was *Good*. Because it put *Adam* (personally considered) under better Circumstances than he was before. For while in a State of pure Nature, perfect Obedience could not have given him any Title to eternal Life; but, as was said before, God might have annihilated him at Pleasure, after a Hundred, or a Thousand, or ten Thousand Years, without any Injustice to him. (*Job* 22. 2. *Rom.* 11. 35.) But now under this Constitution he had an Assurance of eternal Life upon perfect Obedience. For inasmuch as God threatned *Death* in Case he should sin, it is evidently implied that he should have *lived for ever* in Case he had been obedient. So that there was infinite Goodness manifested to *Adam* (personally considered) in this Constitution, eternal Life being thus promised of mere unmerited Bounty. And besides, after a While his State of Trial would have been at an End, and he confirmed in an immutable State of Holiness and Happiness; of which Confirmation *the Tree of Life* seems to have been designed as a *sacramental Sign*. Gen. 3. 22. Rev. 2. 7. and 22. 14. Whereas had he remained in a State of pure Nature, he must have been everlastingly in a State of Probation, had it pleased his Maker to have

continued

continued him in Being. So that, upon the Whole, it is plain, this Constitution, as to *Adam* personally considered, was *holy*, *just* and *good*. And *Adam* had great Reason, with all his Heart to give Thanks to God his Maker, for his Goodness and Condescension, that he would be so kind and stoop so low, as to enter into such a Covenant with a Worm of the Dust: And no Doubt, he did so with the sincerest Gratitude. We proceed therefore to consider,

(2.) *That if all his Posterity had been put under this same Constitution, one by one, from Age to Age, as they came into Being, to act singly for themselves, it had also, as to them, have been HOLY, JUST and GOOD.* As it was better for *Adam* than a State of pure Nature, so it would have been for the same Reason better for us. We (had we remained in a State of pure Nature, i.e. without any Constitution at all) should have been each one of us under the same infinite Obligation to perfect Obedience to the Law of Nature, and equally exposed to the same infinite Punishment for the least Sin, as he was, and as much without a Title to Life upon perfect Obedience, and as liable to be everlastingly in a State of Probation. And therefore such a Constitution would have been as great a Favour to us, as it was to him; and we equally under Obligations to Gratitude and Thankfulness to God therefor. But,

(3.) *It was as well for our Interest, in the Nature of the Thing, in all Respects, that* Adam *should be made a publick Head and Representative, to act not only for himself, but for all his Posterity, as if we had been put to act singly for our selves; and in some Respects better.* For, *Adam* was, in the Nature of the Thing, in all Respects, *as likely* to stand, as any of us should have been, and in some Respects *more likely*. For he had as good natural Powers, as much of the Image of God, and as great a Sense of his Obligations, as any of us should have had; and had in all Respects as many Motives to Watchfulness; and in some Respects more,—in that not only his own everlasting Welfare lay at Stake, but also the everlasting Welfare of all his Posterity too. Besides, he had just received the Law from God's own Mouth, and he was in a State of perfect Manhood when his Trial began. So that upon the whole, in the Nature of the Thing, it

was more likely he ſhould ſtand, than that any of us ſhould; and therefore it was more for our Intereſt, that he ſhould act for us, than we for our ſelves.—But if we had been put to act ſingly for our ſelves under ſuch a Conſtitution, it had been much better than to be left in a State of pure Nature, and ſo we ſhould have had great Cauſe of Thankfulneſs to God for his Condeſcenſion and Goodneſs; but to have *Adam* appointed to act for us, was in the Nature of the Thing, *ſtill more to our Advantage*; on the Account of which, we have therefore *ſtill greater Cauſe* of Thankfulneſs to the good Governour of the World. It is infinite Wickedneſs therefore, to fly in the Face of Almighty God, and charge him with Unrighteouſneſs, for appointing *Adam* our Head and Repreſentative. We ought rather to ſay, "The Conſtitu-"tion was holy, juſt and good, yea, very good; but to "us belongs Shame and Confuſion of Face, for that we "have ſinned."

Obj. *But God knew how it would turn out, he knew* Adam *would fall and undo himſelf and all his Race.*

Answ. When God called *Abraham*, and choſe him and his Seed for his peculiar People, to give them diſtinguiſhing Advantages and Privileges, and that profeſſedly under the Notion of great Kindneſs and unſpeakable Goodneſs; yet at the ſame Time he *knew* how they would turn out, how they would be a ſtiff-necked People, and would kill his Prophets, his Son and Apoſtles, and ſo be caſt off from being his People. *He knew all this before-hand*; yet that altered not the Nature of the Thing at all; did not diminiſh his Goodneſs, nor leſſen his Grace. And the *Jewiſh* Nation at this Day have Reaſon to ſay, "The Lord's "Ways have been Ways of Goodneſs, and bleſſed be his "Name; but to us belongs Shame and Confuſion of Face, "for that we have ſinned."

Obj. *Yes, but God decreed that* Adam *ſhould fall.*

Answ. He did not decree that *Adam* ſhould fall, any more than he did, that the Seed of *Abraham* ſhould turn out ſuch a ſtiff-necked, rebellious Race. He decreed to permit both to do as they did; but this neither leſſens his Goodneſs, nor their Sin: for God is not obliged to put his Creatures under ſuch Circumſtances as that they ſhall never

never be tempted nor tried; and when they are tried, he is not obliged to keep them from falling: it is enough, that they have sufficient Power to stand if they will; which was the Case with *Adam*.—Besides, God had wise Ends in permiting *Adam* to fall; for he designed to take Occasion therefrom to display all his glorious Perfections in the most illustrious Manner. So that we may say of it (and should, if we loved God above our selves) as *Joseph* does of his Brethren's selling him, *Ye meant it for Evil, but the Lord meant it for Good:* So here, Satan meant it for Evil, but God meant it for Good; even to bring much Glory to his great Name. Therefore be still, and adore his holy Sovereignty. And at the same time acknowledge, that the Constitution, in its own Nature, was holy, just and good,—Yea, very good.— These Things being considered, I proceed to add,

(4.) *That in such a Case, God, as supreme Lord and sovereign Governour of the whole World, had full Power and rightful Authority to constitute* Adam *our common Head and publick Representative, to act in our Behalf.* For, as the Case stood, there could be no reasonable Objection against it. *Adam* was not held up to hard Terms. The Threatning in Case of Disobedience was strictly just. The Constitution in it's own Nature was vastly for the Interest of *Adam* and of all his Race. *Adam* was already constituted the *natural* Head of all Mankind; for *God blessed him, saying, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the Earth.* Gen. 1. 28. All his Race, had they then existed, would, if they had been wise for themselves, readily have consented to such a Constitution, as being well adapted to the general Good. (So Men are wont to do, when their Estates lie at Stake, or their Lives; if they think that an *Attorney* is likely to manage the Case for them better than they can for themselves, they will choose him, and venture the Case with him, rather than with themselves.) So that the only Question is, whether God had, in so unexceptionable a Case, full Power and rightful Authority to constitute *Adam* a publick Head, to stand as a *moral* Representative for all his Race and act in their Behalf, so that they should stand and fall with him? Or in other Words, (for it all comes to the same Thing) whether in any Case whatsoever, God has full Power

and rightful Authority to appoint one to ſtand and act in the Room of another, ſo as to lay a Foundation for the Conduct of the one to be ſo imputed to the other, as that both ſhall ſtand and fall together? And ſo it is as much of a Queſtion, whether God had Power and Authority to conſtitute the *ſecond Adam* a publick Head, as the *firſt?* if God had not full Power and rightful Authority, to appoint the *firſt Adam* to be our publick Head and moral Repreſentative, to ſtand and act in our Behalf, ſo as to lay a Foundation for his Conduct to be ſo imputed to us, as that we ſhould ſtand and fall with him: *Then* he had not full Power and rightful Authority, to appoint the *ſecond Adam* to be a publick Head and moral Repreſentative, to ſtand and act in the Room of a guilty World, ſo as to lay a Foundation for his Righteouſneſs to be ſo imputed to them that believe in him, as that they ſhould be juſtified and ſaved thro' it. For if God has not Power to conſtitute one to ſtand and act in the Room of another, *in any Caſe whatſoever*; and if on this Foot, we ſay he had not Power to appoint the *firſt Adam*, 'tis plain that on the ſame Foot, he had no Power to appoint the *ſecond*. I ſuppoſe it will be readily granted, that if God has Power, in any Caſe whatſoever, to conſtitute one to ſtand and act in the Room of another, in the Manner aforeſaid; then he had in theſe two Inſtances of *Adam* and *Chriſt*, which are doubtleſs, on all Accounts, in themſelves, moſt unexceptionable. But if God, in no Caſe whatſoever, has Power to appoint one thus to ſtand and act in the Room of another, then both theſe Conſtitutions are effectually undermined and render'd null and void. We can neither be guilty of *Adam's* firſt Sin, ſo as juſtly to be expoſed to Condemnation and Ruin therefor; nor can the Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt* be ſo imputed to us, as to intitle us to Juſtification and Life. One Man's Diſobedience cannot *conſtitute* many to be Sinners, nor the Obedience of one *conſtitute* many to be righteous. We can neither be ruined by the *firſt Adam*, nor redeemed by the *ſecond*. Under the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation it was ordained (*Lev.* 16.) that *Aaron ſhould lay both his Hands upon the Head of the live-Goat, and confeſs over him all the Iniquities of the Children of Iſrael, and all their Tranſ-*

greſſions

gressions in all their Sins, putting them upon the Head of the Goat, and send him away by the Hand of a fit Man into the Wilderness. And (says God) *the Goat shall bear upon him all their Iniquities, unto a Land not inhabited.* We used to to think, this *scape-Goat* was designed by God to typify Christ. And the Scripture has taught us in express Language, that *the Iniquities of us all were laid on him*, that *he bare our Sins*, that *he was made a Curse for us*, that *by his Obedience many are made righteous.* (*Isai.* 53. 6. *Pet.* 2. 24. *Gal.* 3. 13. *Rom.* 5. 19.) But if God has not Authority to constitute one to stand and act in the Room of another, this must all be void and of none Effect. And thus while Men are disputing against the original Constitution with *Adam*, they unawares undermine this second Constitution, which is the Foundation of all our Hopes. Eager to avoid *Adam's* first Sin, whereby comes Condemnation; they render of none Effect Christ's Righteousness, whereby comes Justification. And if Christ did not stand and act as a publick Person, if our Sins were not laid upon him, if he did not bare them on the Tree, if he was not made a Curse for us, and if we are not to be pardoned thro' his Atonement and justified thro' his Righteousness, then the Gospel is all a Fable, and the whole Scheme of our Salvation therein revealed is wholly overthrown. What remains therefore but Deism and Infidelity? But in as much as we have full Evidence to the Truth of the Christian Revelation, and may be assured that it is from God, we may therefore be confirmed in it, that Jesus Christ has been by God the great Governour of the World appointed a publick Person, to stand and act, to obey and suffer in our Room, that thro' his Obedience and Sufferings we might have Pardon and eternal Life. And from this Fact we may be assured, that God has full Power and rightful Authority to constitute one to stand and act in the Room of another. And if he has such Authority, nothing hinders but that he might constitute *Adam* to be our publick Head, as has been said.

Besides, if we consider the Nature of the Thing it self, it is plain that God had Power to constitute *Adam* our publick Head. For God as moral Governour of the World and sovereign Lord of all Things has Power to make any Constitution

Conſtitution whatſoever, which does in it's own Nature agree to the eternal Fitneſs of Things, or in other Words, which is agreeable to his own Perfections. But all will grant, that Conſtitution is agreeable to his own Perfections, which, in its own Nature is ſuited to the Glory of God and Good of the Creatures. Now this Conſtitution with *Adam* was in its own Nature ſuited to the general Good of Mankind, becauſe the Welfare of Mankind was in the Nature of the Thing ſafer and better ſecured upon ſuch a Foot, than if every ſingle Child of *Adam* had been left in a State of pure Nature without any Conſtitution at all, or than if they had every one been put to act ſingly for himſelf: as has been before proved. And it was well ſuited to the Glory of God, becauſe in that Conſtitution, conſidered in it's own Nature, God eminently appeared to be what he was. For in it he appeared as the MOST HIGH GOD, the SUPREME LORD and SOVEREIGN GOVERNOUR of the whole World; for in it he acted as *ſovereign Lord* of his Creatures, as being by *Nature God*, and as having an *abſolute Right to* and *Authority over* the Works of his Hands. And when God acts ſo, as by his Conduct to ſhew what he is, then are his Doings ſuited to his own Glory; for nothing is more to his Glory, than to appear to be what he is. And in as much as the Conſtitution it ſelf was well ſuited to the general Good of Mankind, God did, in making of it, act a kind and tender Part towards the human Race, to the Honour and Glory of his Goodneſs. And while eternal Life was promiſed to perfect Obedience, and eternal Death threatned to Diſobedience, God's infinite Love to Vertue and infinite Hatred of Vice were manifeſted, to the Glory of his Holineſs and Juſtice. Since then that Conſtitution was thus, in it's own Nature, ſuited to our Good and God's Glory; there is no doubt but the ſovereign Lord and Governour of all Things, had full Power and rightful Authority, ſo to appoint: for in ſo doing, he would act agreeable to his own Perfections, and the eternal Fitneſs of Things.

BUT TO CONCLUDE, We may be abundantly ſatisfied, not only from the Nature of the Thing, but alſo from *what God has in Fact done*, that that Conſtitution was holy,

holy, just and Good, and that he had full Power and rightful Authority to do as he did, because otherwise he would never have done so; he would never have made such a Constitution. It is plain and evident from *Facts*, that *Adam* was considered and dealt with under the Capacity of a publick Head, and that Death *natural*, *spiritual* and *eternal* were included in the Threatning; for all his Posterity are evidently dealt with *just as if that had been the Case*. They are born *spiritually dead*, as has been proved in the former Discourse. They are evidently liable to *natural Death*, as soon as they are born. And if they die and go into Eternity with their native Temper, they must necessarily be miserable, in being what they are, unlike to God and uncapable of the Enjoyment of him, and contrary to him. And God must necessarily look upon them with everlasting Abhorrence; for he cannot but abhor Creatures whose Tempers are contrary to him. So that here is *eternal Death*. And all in Consequence of *Adam*'s first Sin.

Now then, if indeed we are in *Fact* dealt with just as we should have been, had *Adam* been our publick Head, there can surely need no farther Evidence to prove that this was the Case; for *the Judge of all the Earth cannot but do Right*: And therefore he would not deal with us as being guilty of *Adam*'s first Sin, were not *Adam* our Representative. But had *Adam* been our Representative, and his first Sin imputed to us; yet *then* we should have been dealt with no otherwise than *now* we; are i. e. On Supposition of the Interposition of a Mediator, as is now the Case. For that we are now born into the World subject to *natural Death*, none can deny, and this by Virtue of *Adam*'s first Sin: And if we are really *spiritually dead* too, and so exposed to *eternal Death*, 'tis just what might have been expected, had *Adam* stood for us; and so there is no more to be said. And if God be such a Being, as I suppose he is, and the Law such, and the Nature of true Holiness such; then, as has been shewn in the *first Discourse*, there is no doubt we are natively *spiritually dead*. So that the Force of this Argument depends upon the Truth of those *first Principles*, which, I think, have been sufficiently proved. Right Apprehensions of the *moral Law* will at once convince us of our inherent natural

natural Corruption, and make us feel that we are *fallen* Creatures.

Remark. Perhaps this is the Consideration, which most commonly first leads poor Sinners to see, that they do actually lie under the Guilt of *Adam*'s first Sin; and that their Ruin thence took its Rise, *viz.* their finding by Experience, when the Spirit of God brings home the Law and awakens Conscience, that they are *by Nature dead in Trespasses and Sins:* for now no Conclusion can be more natural, than that they are *by Nature Children of Wrath.* And this will naturally lead them to enquire, Whence this has comes to pass? and they will presently find the Scripture express and plain in it, that *by one Man's Disobedience, many were made Sinners*; and *by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all to Condemnation:* and their own Experience will give them the most natural Comment upon the Words, while they feel themselves to be by Nature dead in Sin and exposed to eternal Ruin. But now, "How could I justly "have all this come upon me for *Adam*'s first Sin?" will naturally be the next Thought. And an awakened Conscience will perhaps first of all reply, "How it is just & right "I cannot tell, but I am certain so it is, that I am by Nature "dead in Sin, & by Nature a Child of Wrath. This I see and "feel. And the Scripture says, that *by one Man's Disobedience "many were made Sinners*; and that *for the Offence of one "Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation.* And God's "Ways must be righteous, for the Judge of all the Earth "always does right. And if I do finally perish, I have "nothing to say; for I have gone in *Adam*'s Steps, I "have been voluntary in my Rebellion against God all "my Life, and am at Heart an Enemy to him still, and "that voluntarily so." And this may in a Measure silence such a poor Sinner for the present. But if ever he comes to be reconcil'd to the divine Nature, and then impartially to look into the original Constitution, he may then see that it was in it's own Nature, holy, just and good, and worthy of God the great Governour of the World; and as such sweetly acquiesce in it: saying, "God's Ways were holy, "just and good, and blessed be his Name; but to us (to "all the human Race) belongs Shame and Confusion of

"Face

"Face, for that we have sinned." But until Men are awakened, at least to some Sense of their natural Corruption, they are commonly very blind and deaf to all the Scripture says about this Matter. It is hard to make Men believe contrary to their own Experience; to make them believe that they *fell* in *Adam*, when they don't feel that they are by Nature *fallen* Creatures. Let the Scripture speak ever so plain, yet they cannot believe that it means as it says. It must mean, they think, something else. The best Method therefore to convince Sinners of the Doctrine of original (imputed) Sin, and to silence all their Cavils, is to open the true Meaning of the *moral Law*, and shew them their native Depravity. This is the Method which God takes in the Bible. He says but little about *Adam*'s first Sin, but says much to shew us what we really are, as knowing that if we are but once convinced of our native Corruption, a few Words are sufficient to shew us whence our Ruin originally took it's Rise.

Thus, God the great Governour of the World, in the Gospel-Dispensation, considered Mankind as being in a perishing Condition, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless and undone; and one Ground and Reason of his looking upon Mankind to be in such a Condition, was our original Apostacy from him in our first Parents. And since that Constitution, whereby *Adam* was made our common Head and publick Representative, was holy, just and good in its own Nature; and since God the supreme Lord of all Things had full Power and rightful Authority so to ordain and appoint; hence therefore he has sufficient Reason to look upon Mankind, on Account of this first Apostacy, as he does.

Therefore at the same Time he provided a Saviour for *Adam*, at the same Time did he also provide a Saviour for his Posterity too; they being considered as one with him and involved in the same Sin and Guilt and Ruin; and so standing in equal Need of Relief. Hence Christ is called *the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*. Then was it said, that *the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head*. To which original Grant our Saviour seems to have Respect, when he says, *God so loved the World, that he GAVE his only*

only begotten Son, &c. Whereas, had *Adam* acted in the Capacity of a private Person, and sinned and fallen for himself alone, and his Posterity not been involved in the same Ruin; *Adam* might have had a Saviour provided for him: But his Posterity would no more have needed one, than the Angels in Heaven, or than *Adam* before his Fall.

Obj. *But those Words*, In the Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, Gen. 2. 17. *were evidently spoken only to* Adam, *nor is there a Word said about his Posterity having any Interest or Concern in the Affair.*

Ans. So also were those Words in Gen. 3. 19. *Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return*, spoken only to *Adam* without the least Intimation that his Posterity were any of them included in the Sentence. And yet by Vertue of that Sentence, all his Posterity are subject to Death. *Rom.* 5. 12, 13, 14. Do you account for this, and you will at the same Time account for that: For the Truth is, that in both Cases *Adam* was considered not merely as a single private Person, but as a publick Head and Representative, standing in the Room of all his Posterity. And considered in this Capacity, was he threatned with *Death* in Case he sinned; and considered in this Capacity, was *natural Death* denounced upon him after his Fall. So that in both, his Posterity were equally included. And therefore St. *Paul* calls *Adam* a *Type* of *Christ*. *Rom.* 5. 14. And calls *Christ* the *second Adam*. 1 *Cor.* 15. 45. Because both these, by the Authority of the great Governour of the World, were constituted publick Persons, to act in the Behalf of Mankind. And all Mankind were so included in them, that St. *Paul* speaks as if there had been but only these two Men, *Adam* and *Christ*. 1 Cor. 15. 47. *The first Man is of the Earth, earthy: The second Man is the Lord from Heaven.*

2. God the supreme Ruler of the World does in the Gospel consider Mankind as being in a perishing Condition, not only on the Account of their original Apostacy in *Adam*, their common Head and Representative; but also *because they are, what they are, in themselves.* (1.) Destitute of the divine Image. (2.) Contrary to God in the Temper of their Hearts. (3.) Utterly averse to a Reconciliation. (4.) In a Disposition, if unrestrained, to live in all open

open Rebellion against the Majesty of Heaven before his Face. (5.) And yet insensible of their just Desert and of their Need of sovereign Grace; and ready rather to think it a cruel Thing, if God should damn them.

(1.) *God saw Mankind destitute of his moral Image.* For being conscious of the holy Temper of his own Heart, of the holy Propensity of his own Nature; and being conscious to the Temper of their Hearts, to the Propensity of their Nature; at first View, he saw what they were. *God looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doth Good, no, not one.* Psal. 53. 2. 3.—— He saw Mankind destitute of aConformity to his holyLaw. The Law requires Mankind to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, and to love one another as their own Souls: But he looked down from Heaven, he beheld, and lo, all the human Race were entirely devoid of that Temper. None were in a Disposition to account him infinitely glorious in being what he was. Not one had the least Relish or Taste for the Beauty of his moral Perfections. Every Heart empty of holy Love, and holy Delight, and devoid of any true Spirit or Principle of Obedience. And all Mankind had lost that Frame of Spirit towards one another, which they ought to have. The whole World lay in Ruin.

He knew, his Law was holy, just and good, and that his Creature Man was under infinite Obligations to a perfect Conformity thereto. He saw what Grounds there were for the Law, and what Reasons for their Obedience. He saw his own infinite Excellency, and his original, underived, entire Right to them, and was conscious to his rightful Authority over them. He judged them infinitely to Blame for their Non-Conformity, and worthy of an infinite Punishment. Speaking after the Manner of Men, he did, in the inward Temper of his Heart, perfectly approve of those Words in Gal. 3. 10. as being strictly just, *Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all Things written in the Book of the Law, to do them.*——Therefore he looked onMankind in a perishing Condition. But,

(2.) *He*

(2.) *He viewed Mankind not only deſtitute of Good, but full of Evil.* Not only void of true Love to God and to one another, but Enemies to God and living in Malice and Envy among themſelves. He looked down from Heaven and viewed a guilty World, and ſaw their Contrariety to his Nature and to his Law. Conſcious of his own divine Temper, he ſaw every contrary Temper in them. What he eſteems, they deſpiſe. What he delights in, they loath. The End which he proſecutes, they oppoſe. And they eſteem and delight in that which is contrary to him, and proſecute Ends and Deſigns contrary to his. He, ſaw their Views, their Tempers, their Wills, their Ends, Deſigns and Ways, were all contrary to him, and diametrically oppoſite to his Law. He conſidered them as his Enemies, and their Tempers as perfect Enmity and Contrariety to the divine Nature. *Rom.* 8. 7.

(3.) And in as much as he thus ſaw them entirely deſtitute of Love to him, and diametrically contrary to the divine Nature in the Temper of their Hearts, *He knew they would have no Inclination to a Reconciliation to God; but would be naturally averſe to it.* He knew, their Averſion to a Reconciliation would be as ſtrong as their Contrariety to the divine Nature, from which it took it's Riſe. He ſaw that if he ſhould attempt to reclaim them, he ſhould only meet with Reſiſtance. That if he ſhould ſpread the News of Pardon and Peace thro' a guilty World, and invite them to return and be reconciled, that they would make light of it and deſpiſe it. That if he ſhould ſend Meſſengers after them, to perſwade them to return and beſeech them to be reconciled, that they would put many of them to Death. He ſaw juſt what Treatment, the Prophets, and Chriſt, and his Apoſtles were like to meet with. He knew not one in all the World would repent and convert, unleſs brought thereto by his own almighty Arm, and all-conquering Grace. *Mat.* 21. 33—39. *Rom.* 8. 7. 1 *Cor.* 3. 6. 7.

(4.) *Yea, ſo far from a Diſpoſition to repent and convert, that, if left wholly to themſelves unreſtrained, no Wickedneſs would be too bad for them.* All would act as bad as *Cain, Manaſſeh*, or *Judas*; and the whole human Race be like ſo many

many incarnate Devils: they having the Seed of all Sin in their Hearts. *Mar.* 7. 21, 22.

(5.) And yet *insensible of their Sin and Guilt and just Desert, and that they lie merely at the sovereign Mercy of God, and that he is at Liberty to shew Mercy, or not, as seems good in his Sight.* Yea, so averse to the Knowledge of this their true State, as to be disposed to hate the Light and shut their Eyes against it, ready to resist all Methods of Conviction. Yea, that some would be even so perverse, as actually to rise in Arms against his Messengers, who endeavoured to shew them their Ruin and the Way of their Recovery, and put them to Death, as not fit to live: and yet so stupid, as to think, that in all they did God good Service. And that in general, a great Out-cry would be raised, round a proud and guilty World, against the Lord, for supposing Mankind to be in so bad, so very forlorn an Estate. God knew the Pride of Man, that he is exceeding proud; and saw how great Offence would be given to a guilty World, who would by no Means endure to be so affronted. *Joh.* 3. 19, 20. & 8. 33. 47.

Now, such were the Grounds upon which God looked upon the human Race in a perishing Condition; sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless and undone. And considering that the original Constitution with *Adam*, according to which he and all his Posterity were doomed to Destruction, in Case he fell, was holy, just and good; and considering that the Law of Nature, which all Mankind are naturally under, and according to which the least Sin exposes to eternal Damnation, is also holy, just and good; and considering our Apostacy in *Adam*, and what we be in our selves: I say, considering all these Things, it is most certain and evident, that the Judgment of God was according to Truth, while he esteemed Mankind to be thus in a perishing Condition.

That Mankind are actually of such a Nature, has been demonstrated in the *former Discourse*. That God, whose Understanding is infinite, and who sees all Things as being what they really are, must therefore now see Mankind to be such, is self-evident. And *such* as he *now* sees them to be, *such* he from the Beginning *knew* they would be. It is evi-

dent therefore, *à priori*, that God must have considered Mankind to be *such*, when he first entred upon his Designs of Grace revealed in the Gospel.—And if we consider the Nature of the Gospel, and what Methods God has taken with a sinful, guilty World to reclaim and recover them, and how they have behaved under all; it will be still more evident that Mankind are verily in such a Case. The Law, the Gospel, and Experience, all join to confirm it.

Had not the Gospel considered us, as being entirely devoid of the divine Image, destitute of any spiritual good Thing, blind, dead, graceless; why should it so much urge the Necessity of our being *born again*, made *new Creatures*, having *our Eyes opened*, being *raised from the Dead*, being *created a-new to good Works*, and having *the Law written in our Hearts*, *the Heart of Stone took away*, and *an Heart of Flesh given?* — Had not the Gospel considered us, as being *Enemies to God*; why should it invite us to be *reconciled?* — Had not the Gospel considered us as being *very averse* to a Reconciliation; why should it pray and beseech us with so much *Earnestness* and *Solemnity* to be reconciled, and use *so many* Arguments?—Had not the Gospel considered our Reconciliation, as unattainable by the most powerful Arguments, of themselves; why should it declare that after all, neither *Paul* nor *Apollos*, nor *Cephas*, are any Thing, or can do any Thing, unless God himself give the Increase?—And were we not Enemies to God, and Rebels, and inveterate haters of the Light, and disposed to rise in Arms against it, why should Christ tell his Ministers, *I send you forth as Sheep among Wolves*; *if they have called the Master of the House* Beelzebub, *no wonder they call you so*; *you shall be hated of all Men for my Name's sake*; *they that kill you, will think they do God good Service?* That Generation tho't as well of themselves as the present Generation now on Earth does, and were ready to speak the same Language, and say, *If we had lived in the Days of our Fathers, we would not have killed the Prophets*; but Christ knew their Hearts. — And had not Mankind, on these Accounts, been considered, as in a perishing Condition; sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless and undone, why was there provided *such a Redeemer*, and *such a Sanctifier?* And why was the Salvation

vation of Sinners every where represented, as being so *entirely* owing to the Grace, the mere Grace, the free astonishing, wonderful Grace of God from first to last? Surely from all this, most certain and evident it is, that God does in the Gospel, upon these Grounds, consider Mankind, as being in a perishing Condition: And upon these Grounds we must therefore come to consider our selves so too, or we can never be in a Disposition, humbly and thankfully to accept the Grace offered, and return home to God in the Way provided. We shall rather be affronted, that the Gospel supposes us to be in so bad a Condition; or else never so much as take Matters into serious Consideration, but do as those invited to the Marriage of the King's Son in Mat. 22. 5. *They made light of it, and went their Ways, one to his Farm, another to his Merchandise.*— I do but just hint at these Things now, because they have been so largely insisted upon heretofore. — And thus we see upon what Grounds it is, that the great Governour of the World, does in the Gospel, consider Mankind as being in a perishing Condition.

Section II.

Shewing whence God's Design of Mercy *towards a perishing World originally took it's* Rise.

I proceed now,

II. To shew, *What were the Motives, which have excited God to do what he has done, for the Recovery of Sinners, out of this their perishing Condition.* And

1. *It was not because the original Constitution with* Adam *our publick Head and Representative, was too severe: It was not because it would have been hard and cruel, or in the least inconsistent with his infinite Goodness and tender Mercies, to have left all Mankind in that State of total Ruin, they were brought into by the Fall.* For had not that Constitution been in it's own Nature holy, just & good, and so most perfectly agreeable to his own Nature, to his Holiness, Justice and Goodness, he would never have made it: For he necessarily infinitely abhors, in his publick Conduct, to act counter to the inward Temper of his Heart. For the very

Reaſon that he loves himſelf for being what he is, for the ſame Reaſon he loves to act like himſelf and infinitely abhors the contrary.—— And if that Conſtitution was holy, juſt and good in it's own Nature originally, it muſt remain ſo ſtill; for *Adam's* Apoſtacy, together with all the dreadful Conſequences thereof, could not alter its Nature. The Conſtitution is perfectly as excellent as if *Adam* had never fallen; perfectly as Good as if it had been the Means of laying a Foundation for the everlaſting Bleſſedneſs of all the human Race; for it is, what it was. It was excellently well calculated for the Glory of God and the Welfare of Mankind in it's own Nature; and therefore God made it, approv'd of it, was well pleaſed with it, nor can he ever alter his Mind about it: for it is in it ſelf juſt the ſame it was at firſt—— And if it was holy, juſt and good in it's own Nature, and if it remains ſo ſtill; if the Holineſs, Juſtice and Goodneſs of his Nature prompted him at firſt to make it, and then to approve of it, and be perfectly well pleaſed with it; it could not ('tis ſelf-evident) poſſibly have been in the leaſt diſagreeable to his Holineſs, Juſtice or Goodneſs, to have dealt with all Mankind ſince the Fall according to it. So that, to a Demonſtration, God's Thoughts of Mercy towards a guilty, undone World, did not in any Meaſure take their Riſe from any Notion that Mankind had been hardly dealt with, or that it would be any Thing like Cruelty and Unmercifulneſs, to damn the whole World for *Adam's* firſt Sin, according to the Tenour of the original Conſtitution.—— Indeed, to ſuppoſe ſuch a Thing, highly reflects upon that Conſtitution, and upon God for ever making of it. It ſuppoſes, the Conſtitution was never really holy, juſt and good in it's own Nature, and that God did wrong in making of it.—— And the Riches and Glory of Goſpel-Grace are wholly obſcured; for God cannot be conſidered as a *ſovereign Benefactor* ſhewing undeſerved Mercy to a guilty, Hell-deſerving World; but rather as repenting for the Injury he has done to Mankind, and as endeavouring to make amends for it by a better, a juſter and kinder Conduct for the Time to come.— And if this were the Caſe, all his Pretences, his high Pretences, to great Love and Goodneſs, to great Kindneſs and Grace,

Grace, are hypocritical and a mere mocking of us. He had abused and injured us, and is now but *repenting* and *making Restitution*; and ought therefore to have said so, and not pretended he did all from *mere Grace*, which is to affront us, and make as if that Constitution was holy, just and good, and we righteously condemned and justly miserable for ever.—— So that let us view the Case in what Light we will, it is most evident and certain, that the great Governour of the World considered Mankind as being righteously condemned and liable to everlasting Destruction, consistent with the infinite Goodness of his Nature; nor did a Thought of Pity ever enter into his Heart from the contrary Supposition.—— Yea, it seems to have been his very Design to maintain the Honour of that Constitution, while he shews Mercy to a guilty World, in as much as he has appointed another publick Person, his own dear Son, to make Atonement for our original Apostacy, as well as our other Sins, that hereby a Way for his Mercy might be opened. *Rom.* 5. 18, 19.

2. Nor did God's Designs of Mercy towards a guilty, undone World take their Rise *from a Supposition that the Law of Nature, which all Mankind are naturally under, is too severe, in requiring perfect Obedience and threatning eternal Damnation for the very least Defect*; (Rom. 1. 18. *Gal.* 3. 10.) *or from any Supposition, that it would have been any Thing like Cruelty or Unmercifulness, to have dealt with all Mankind according to that Rule.*

To explain my self, I may just observe, that the original Constitution with *Adam*, as publick Head, (*Gen.* 2. 17.) was a *positive* Appointment. After he was turned out of the Garden he ceased to sustain the Character or Capacity of a publick Person, nor are his Posterity accountable for any but his first Transgression. But the Law of Nature results from the Nature of Things, from God's being what he is in himself and from our being what we are, & he our Creator and we his Creatures. And it was binding in order of Nature antecedent to any positive Constitution whatsoever: nor is it's binding Nature capable of any Dissolution. We might have obtained Life, according to the Constitution made with *Adam*, had he kept Covenant with God; and

been confirmed in a State of Holineſs and Happineſs; ſo now we may obtain Life by Jeſus Chriſt, who has fulfilled the Law of Nature and made Attonement for all Sin: But the Law of Nature ſtill remains an unalterable Rule of Righteouſneſs between God and his Creature Man. We owe perfect Obedience to God, and the leaſt Sin deſerves eternal Damnation. And God might always have dealt with Mankind, ſimply according to this Rule. The original Conſtitution with *Adam* had ſome Degree of GRACE in it. The Conſtitution in the Goſpel is altogether GRACE. God might have held all Mankind bound by the Law of Nature ſimply, nor ever have appointed any other Way to Happineſs, than a perfect and perſevering Obedience: and Mankind have been to all Eternity in a peccable State, liable to Sin and fall into Ruin. Whatſoever Advantages Mankind have had over and above this, are, and have been, of *mere Grace*. According to the Law of Nature we are under infinite Obligations to perfect Holineſs in the Temper of our Hearts, and to perfect Obedience in the whole Courſe of our Lives, and that not only for a Day or a Year or a Thouſand Years, but ſo long as we continue in Being. And ſo long as we are thus obedient, we ſhall be happy; but the leaſt Defect at any Time whatſoever will let in everlaſting inevitable Ruin upon us. *Adam* in Innocence was under the Law of Nature, as well as under that particular poſitive Conſtitution in *Gen.* 2. 17. So that any other Sin, as well as eating the forbidden Fruit, muſt have expoſed him to Ruin. But then by that Conſtitution he had this peculiar Advantage, that if he perſevered, his Time of Trial ſhould ſhortly be at an End, and himſelf and all his Race confirmed in a State of Holineſs and Happineſs. An Advantage never to be obtained by any one merely under the Law of Nature. For in the Nature of Things it is impoſſible, God ſhould ever be laid under any Obligations to his Creatures unleſs by Virtue of his own free Promiſe, which does not belong to the Law of Nature, but is an Act of Grace, which he may grant or withhold as ſeems good in his Sight.—— When *Adam* broke Covenant with God, and when that poſitive Conſtitution was at an End; yet ſtill *Adam* remained under the Law of Nature,

bound

bound to perfect Obedience, to love God with all his Heart, and his Neighbour as himself; yea, under infinite Obligations, and every Defect was infinitely sinful, and so was worthy of infinite Punishment. And as was the Case with him, so is the Case with all his Posterity. Our Obligations are infinite, and so our Non-performance infinitely faulty, and worthy of an infinite Punishment. Tho' indeed as the Case now stands, nor *Adam*, nor any of his Race can ever obtain Life by the Law of Nature, because we are Sinners, and so by the Law of Nature are condemned without Hope. Rom. 3. 20. *By the Deeds of the Law no Flesh can be justified; for by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin.* And Chap. 4. ℣. 15. *The Law worketh Wrath.* And thus as the Case now stands, we are under infinite Obligations to perfect Obedience, and are liable to an infinite Punishment for the least Defect: and yet, thro' the bad Temper of our Hearts, we are unable to yield any Obedience, and are in a Disposition to be continually treasuring up Wrath against the Day of Wrath.

Now, I say, the supreme King of Heaven and Earth was not moved to entertain Designs of Mercy towards a sinful, guilty undone World, from a Supposition that the Law of Nature was too severe, or that it would have been any Thing like Unmercifulness to have dealt with all Mankind according to that Rule. For,

All that this Law requires, is, that since GOD is infinitely amiable in himself, and has such an entire Right to us and absolute Authority over us as his Creatures, we therefore *love him with all our Hearts*, and be entirely devoted to him, to do his Will and keep his Commands, seeking his Glory: and that, since our Neighbours are such as we, of the same Species and under the same general Circumstances, we therefore *love our Neighbour as our selves:* both which Things are in their own Nature right and fit and reasonable. So that the Law is *holy*.—And all that this Law threatens in Case of any Transgression, is, that since our Obligations are infinite, and so the least Defect infinitely wrong; therefore every such Defect should be punished with the everlasting Pains of Hell; and that in exact Proportion to the several Aggravations attending each Transgression. Which is also in it's own Nature right and fit

and reaſonable. So that the Law is *juſt*.—And that perfect Holineſs which this Law requires, *i. e.* to love God with all ourHearts and our Neighbours as our ſelves, is the higheſt Perfection our Nature is capable of, and altogether ſuited to make us happy. So that theLaw is *good*. But,

It is not ſevere, nor any Thing like Unmercifulneſs, to deal with Mankind according to a Rule, which is, in it's own Nature, holy, juſt and good: but rather, it muſt have been agreable to the Holineſs, Juſtice and Goodneſs of the great Governour of the World ſo to do. And indeed,were not this the Caſe, it would have been fit this Law ſhould have been repealed. Mankind did not need to be redeemed from the Curſe of an unrighteous Law; for ſuch a Law ought to be laid aſide, and it's Curſes never executed. God would have been bound in Juſtice to have aboliſhed an unrighteous Law. There is no Need of Chriſt or Goſpel-Grace in the Caſe. And ſo all the high Commendations of the Grace of God in providing a Saviour, as being rich free and wonderful, are groundleſs; and caſt much Reproach upon Mankind, as being a guilty Race, righteouſly condemned, when in Truth it is no ſuch Thing. God ought to have owned that the Law was wrong, and to have repealed it, and not to have proceeded as if it was very good, and Mankind altogether to blame, and worthy of eternal Damnation. And mightily would this have pleaſed an apoſtate, proud and guilty World; and at the ſame Time caſt infinite Reproach upon God and his holy Law, and ſhut out all the Grace of the Goſpel.

God has therefore in the Goſpel, not only ſuppoſed the Law to be holy, juſt and good, and Mankind righteouſly condemned; but has taken all poſſible Care to make it evident that he does ſo, and thereby to ſecure the Honour of his Law, diſcountenance Sin, humble the Sinner, and exalt and magnify his Grace. Even the whole Scheme of the Goſpel is wiſely calculated to attain theſe Ends, as we ſhall ſee hereafter. So far was God from being moved to pity Mankind from a Suppoſition that they had in this Reſpect been too ſeverely dealt with, and ſo Objects of Pity in that Senſe; that on the contrary he moſt perfectly approved of the Law as holy, juſt and good, and was altogether

ther in it, that Mankind deserved to be proceeded with according to it. Yea, so highly did he approve of his holy Law, and so odious and ill-deserving did Mankind appear in his Eyes for breaking of it, that their Sin cried aloud for Vengeance in his Ears. Yea, cried so loud for Vengeance, that he judged it necessary that his own Son should appear in their Stead and die in their Room; to the End he might be just, might act consistently with the Holiness and Justice of his Nature, while he shewed Mercy to them. *Rom.* 3. 9—26.—In such a Light he viewed Things; in such a Light must we therefore view them too, or we can never truly understand our Need of Christ & GospelGrace, or cordially acquiesce in theGospel-Way of Salvation: but rather shall be disposed to quarrel with the Strictness of the Law, and think our selves abused, and imagine that God deals hardly with us.

3. Nor was the supreme Being moved to entertain Designs of Mercy towards Mankind, *from a Supposition, that their Inability to yield perfect Obedience made them the less to blame, and so the more proper Objects of Pity on that Account.* For Mankind are not the less to blame for their Inability; but the more unable they are, the greater is their Blame; and so the more proper Objects are they of the divine Wrath and Vengeance.

God is a most excellent and amiable Being. He infinitely deserves our highest Love & Esteem and supreme Delight. It is perfectly fit, we should be of a Disposition to say, *Whom have we in Heaven but thee? and there is nothing on Earth we desire besides thee.* Psal. 73. 25. Now, not to love this God with all our Hearts, must be infinitely wrong; and not to love him at all, must be worse still; but to be habitually contrary to him in the Temper of our Hearts, yea, so averse to him as that we CAN'T love him, must be in the very highest Degree vile and sinful. And *now* to say, we CAN'T, by Way of *Extenuation*, as tho' we were the less to blame for that, is intolerably God-provoking: whenas our CAN'T arises only from the bad Temper of our Hearts, and because we be not what we should be; and not at all from any Unloveliness in the divine Nature, or from our Want of external Advantages for the Knowledge of God.

Put

Put the Case to thy self, O Man. Were you as wise as *Solomon*, as holy as *David*, as humble as *Paul*, and of as loving and kind a Temper as *John*; and had you a Family of Children; and were all the Rules and Orders of your House, like your self; and calculated to make all your Children just such as you be; and did you perceive that your Children neither liked you, nor your Ways, nor the Orders of your House; they shew you much Disrespect in their Carriage, disregard your Authority, complain, your Rules are too strict, and daily break over all Orders: At length you call them to an Account, are about to convince humble and reform them; they plead, they are not to blame, at least not *so much* to blame, because they CAN'T love you, they CAN'T like your Ways, they CAN'T but abhor such Rules and Orders; those very Properties, on Account of which, you are indeed the most excellent Man in the World, these are the very Things for which they dislike you, while in the mean Time they can most heartily love their Companions in Vice and Debauchery: And now the Question is, Whether their Inability to love you, renders 'em e'er the less to blame? Or, whether it be not very provoking in them, to plead in Excuse for themselves, that they *can't* love you? whenas this their *can't* arises from their voluntary Contrariety to all Good, and Love to Debauchery? and not at all from any Unloveliness of your Person or Ways; or for want of Advantages to be acquainted with you, and with the Beauty of your Temper and Conduct. The Application is easy. Was it any Excuse for the Ill-will of the malicious *Pharisees* towards Christ, that they *could not* love him, they *could not* but hate him? Did ever any Man look upon a malicious spightful Neighbour, and think him e'er the less to blame for his abundant ill Carriage, for his being so exceeding ill-natur'd, that it was not in his Heart to do otherwise? I appeal to the common Sense of all Mankind.

If such an Inability can excuse Mankind, then the Devils upon the same Foot may be excused too. And the more any of God's Subjects hate him, the less will they be to blame. For the more any do really hate God, the less able will they be to love him. The more averse to his Law,

Law, the less able to keep it. And therefore since our Inability arises from such a Root, the more unable we be to love God with all our Hearts and yield a perfect Obedience to all his Laws, the more vile, guilty, Hell-deserving we be, and the more unworthy of Pity. So that this our moral Inability and Impotency, or rather *Obstinacy*, was in the Nature of Things so far from extenuating our Guilt and moving the divine Pity, that it was the strongest Evidence of our exceeding Vileness, and as it were a mighty Bar and great Discouragement in the Way of God's ever entertaining any Designs of Mercy towards us. It was like the great Mountains; so that nothing but an infinite Goodness could have ever surmounted it. And in this Light must we view our selves and our Inability, and become Self-condemned before God, or we shall never like it that God looks upon us as he does, nor ever be able to look upon his Grace in the Gospel in the same Light with him, nor can we ever heartily approve of and fall in with that Way of Salvation.

When we are under sufficient outward Advantages to come to know what Kind of Being God is, and yet after all see no Beauty in him, nor esteem him; it must be either because we are intolerably bad in our Temper, or else because he is not truly and indeed a lovely and amiable Being.——When we say, we *can't* love him, under a fond Notion that we are hereby excused and are not to blame; we implicitly say, that we are well enough disposed and are of a good Temper, but God is such an hateful Being that we *cannot* love him. There is nothing in him to be loved. So that to say, we CAN'T, under a Notion of extenuating our Guilt, casts the highest Reflection upon God imaginable, and indeed is big with the blackest Blasphemy. We had as good say, "It is not owing to us that we don't love God, but to him. "We would readily love him, if there was any Thing in "him for us to love: but there is not, and so we *can't*; "and therefore be not to blame."

To suppose therefore that God in the Gospel considers us as being the less to Blame for this our Inability, and from thence is moved to pity us; is the very same Thing in effect, as to suppose that God owns himself a hateful, unlovely

unlovely Being, and thinks it a great Hardſhip that his poor Creatures ſhould be forced to love him, or be damned; and therefore repents that ever he was ſo ſevere, or ever made ſuch a Law, and is ſorry for them, and will do better by them for Time to come. But how horrid a Thought is this! It caſts the higheſt Reflection upon God, and upon his holy Law, and quite deſtroys all the Grace of the Goſpel. No, no! God knew well enough how the Caſe ſtood. He was conſcious to his own infinite Excellency, and to the infinite Reaſonableneſs of his Law. He knew the helliſh Temper of an apoſtate rebellious Race. And verily he was *GOD* and not *Man*, or he would have doomed the whole World to Deſtruction without any Pity or ſo much as one Thought of Mercy. *Herein was Love, not that we loved God; but that God loved us, and ſent his Son to be a Propitiation for our Sins.* 1 Joh. 4. 10. *While we were Sinners and Enemies*, Rom. 5. 8, 10. and moſt ſtrongly averſe to a Reconciliation 2 *Cor.* 5. 20.

4. Nor did his Deſigns of Mercy take their Riſe *from any Expectation that a rebellious, guilty, periſhing World would be ſo good, as of their Accord ever heartily thank him for it.* No, he knew well enough how it would be; that many would make light of it, and go their Ways, one to his Farm, another to his Merchandiſe; and that others would be affronted, and ſome ſo very angry that they would take his Meſſengers, and ſtone one, and beat another, and kill another, and finally would crucify his Son. And he expected that Mankind in general would be diſpoſed to hate his Law, and pervert his Goſpel, and reſiſt his Spirit; and never one in all the World, repent and convert, and come and humble himſelf before him, and bleſs his holy Name; unleſs brought thereto by his own All-conquering Grace. *Mat.* 21. 33—39. and 22. 1——7. *Luk.* 14. 16——23. 1 *Cor.* 3. 6, 7.

So that, from the whole, it is very plain, God was not moved to entertain Thoughts of Mercy towards Mankind, neither under a Notion that they had been in any Reſpect hardly dealt with, nor under a Notion that their Impotency rendered them in any Meaſure excuſable, nor under a Notion that there was any Good in them or to be expected from

from them: but on the contrary, he looked upon the original Constitution with *Adam* to be holy, just and good, and that upon that Foot all Mankind deserved all Ruin; and he looked upon the Law of Nature also holy, just and good, and that upon that Foot a wicked World deserved his everlasting Wrath; and he looked upon them altogether criminal for their Impotency. In a Word, he looked upon them voluntary in their Rebellion, and obstinate in their Enmity, and infinitely unworthy of the least Pity; yea, so unworthy of Pity, that to secure his own Honour, and to save himself from just Reproach, while he pitied them and shewed them Mercy, he thought it needful, that his own Son should become a Mediator, and bear their Sin and suffer for their Guilt, and so open a Way for the honourable Exercise of his Mercy.

To conclude therefore,

5. It is evident that his Designs of Mercy took their Rise *merely, absolutely and entirely from himself; from his own infinite Benevolence, from his self-moving Goodness and sovereign Grace.* GOD *so loved the World*——

As for us, we lay in the open Field of Perdition, polluted, perishing in our Blood and Guilt: and it was perfectly right, that the righteous Sentence of the Law should be executed upon us. And God had been for ever glorious in the everlasting Ruin of a rebellious World. There was nothing in our Circumstances, all Things considered, of the Nature of a *Motive to Pity.* We were too bad to deserve any Pity or Relief. Yea, so bad, that the great Governour of the World could not, without counteracting all good Rules of Government, shew any Mercy but by the Interposition of his own Son, to stand and die in our Room and Stead. So that instead of any motive to Pity, there was every Thing to the contrary. Our infinite ill Desert lay as an infinite Bar in the Way.—— Here now was an Opportunity for infinite Goodness and Self-moving Mercy to exert it self, in the most illustrious Manner; in designing Mercy, in providing a Mediator, and in opening a Door for the exercise of much Grace to Mankind in general, and of special saving Mercy in ten Thousand Thousand Instances.—— There was nothing, *ab extra*, from without God himself,

himself, to move and put him on to such a wonderful and glorious Enterprise. The Motion was wholly from himself, from his Self-moving Goodness, from his good Pleasure according to the Counsel of his own Will. *Eph.* 1. 3—12. —No wonder therefore, the Gospel every where celebrates the Love and Goodness, Mercy and Grace of God, as being rich and free, unparallel'd, unspeakable, inconceivable, infinitely great and glorious, as discovered in this most wonderful of all God's Works. And to suppose that God was under any Obligations to shew these Favours, would be, to undermine and overthrow the whole Gospel; and turn a Deed of the *freest* and *greatest Grace*, into a Work of *mere Justice*. Thus we see whence God's Thoughts of Mercy, towards a sinful, guilty World, had their Rise.

He had in View a great variety of glorious Designs, all infinitely wise, all suited to display the glorious Perfections of his Nature, and bring everlasting Honours to his great Name. He designed to destroy the Works of the Devil. *Gen.* 3. 15. 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. *Satan* had induced Mankind to their Rebellion; and had perhaps in his Conceit too, made himself strong against the Almighty. He first rebelled himself, and now he had brought others to join with him, and in this World he intended to rule and reign; and by the whole bring much Reproach upon the rightful Lord of Heaven and Earth. God wrought therefore for his great Name's sake, that it might not be polluted; and entred upon Methods to defeat his Designs, and bring his Kingdom to nought, and crush the Rebellion, and put him to open Shame; and at length bind him up in his Chains, that he should deceive the Nations of the Earth no more; and give all Nations, Languages and Tongues, to Jesus Christ, and bring the whole World into Subjection to him. *Rev.* 20. 1—4. He designed to display his glorious Grace, in bringing Millions of this seduced apostate Race, from the Jaws of eternal Destruction to eternal Glory. *Rom.* 9. 23. *Eph.* 2. 7. He designed to put all Mankind in a new State of Probation, and to display his glorious Goodness, Patience, Forbearance and Long-suffering in his Dealings with the obstinate and finally impenitent in this World, and his glorious Holiness and Justice in their everlasting Punishment

ment in the World to come, in the same Lake of Fire and Brimstone, which was prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels, with whom they had joined in their Rebellion against the Majesty of Heaven. *Act.* 14. 17. *Rom.* 2. 4. & 9. 22. *Mat.* 25. 41. In a Word, he designed to take Occasion from the Apostacy of Mankind, in innumerable Instances, in this World, and throughout eternal Ages in the World to come, to display all his glorious Perfections: And so by his whole Conduct, to exhibit a most perfect and exact Image of himself.

Thus we see, that his Designs of Mercy, towards a rebellious, guilty, undone World, took their Rise, not from any Motives in us, but altogether from Motives in himself, from the infinite boundless Goodness of his Nature and his sovereign good Pleasure. And in this Light must we view the Grace of the Gospel, and all our Encouragements to hope in his Mercy thro' Jesus Christ, must take their Rise, not from any Thing in our selves, but only from that self-moving Goodness and free Grace which he has manifested thro' JesusChrist. *Rom.* 3. 19, 20, 24. *Eph.* 2. 8.

And thus we see, that his End, as to the Elect, was to bring them back from their Apostacy, their Rebellion and Wickedness and Ruin, to God their rightful Lord and Sovereign, to become his Servants, to love him and live to him and live upon him, and be blessed in him for ever. And in this Light must we view the Gospel. And with this it's Design must we heartily fall in. And being encouraged by the Grace of the Gospel, to hope for Acceptance in the Sight of God thro' Jesus Christ, we must thro'Christ give up our selves to God,to be hisServants for ever.*Luk.* 1. 74. 75. 2 *Cor.* 5. 20.*Rom.*12. 1.*Tit.*2.11--14.

From what has been said, it will be very natural to make these following *Remarks.*

Rem. 1. If all God has done in the Gospel for ourRecovery from Ruin, be of mere free Grace, then it is Self-evident *that God was under no Obligations to a fallen, sinful, guilty, rebellious World; but, as for us, might have, consistent with all his Perfections, left us in Ruin, to inherit the Fruit of our Doings and the Punishment of our Sin.* He was under no Obligation to provide a Redeemer or a Sanctifier, to give

give the leaſt Hint of a Pardon, or take any Methods to recover us from the Power of Sin. He was under no Obligations to deal any better by us, than would, in the whole, be no worſe than Damnation. By the Conſtitution with *Adam*, and by the Law of Nature, this would have been our proper Due. Every thing therefore, whereby our Circumſtances have been rendered better than the Circumſtances of the Damned, God was under no Obligations unto; but all, over and above that, has been of free and ſovereign Grace. God was at Liberty, as to us, not to have done any of theſe Things for us. Yea, there were on our Part *mighty Hindrances* to prevent the Mercy of God, and to put a *Bar* in the Way of the free and honourable Exerciſe of his Grace. Even ſuch Hindrances, that nothing could remove them, but the Blood of Chriſt. Hence,

Rem. 2. *Mankind were, by their Fall, brought into a State of Being infinitely worſe than not to be.* The Damned in Hell no doubt are in ſuch a State, elſe their Puniſhment would not be infinite; as Juſtice requires it ſhould be. But Mankind by the Fall were brought into a State, for Subſtance, * as bad as that which the Damned are in. For the Damned undergo nothing in Hell, but what, by the Conſtitution with *Adam* and the Law of Nature, all Mankind were and would have been, for Subſtance, expoſed unto, if mere Grace had not prevented. And according to what was but now obſerved, God was under no more Obligation, to grant any Relief to Mankind, in this their fallen, ſinful, guilty, undone Condition, than he is now to the Damned in Hell; *i. e.* under no Obligations at all: but the Way for Mercy to come to them was mightily barred and blocked up, by the infinite Reaſonableneſs of their being puniſhed, and their infinite Unworthineſs, in the very Nature of Things, as the Caſe then ſtood, of ever being pitied. So that Mankind were by the Fall brought into a State of Being, (in Scripture called *Condemnation* and *Wrath*,

* *For Subſtance*, I ſay, becauſe it muſt be remembred that the ſuperadded Puniſhment inflicted upon any in Hell, for deſpiſing the Goſpel, muſt be left out of the Account. For all this, is over and above, what, by the Conſtitution with *Adam* and the Law of Nature, Mankind were or ever would have been expoſed unto.

Wrath, *Rom.* 5. 18. *Eph.* 2. 3.) for Substance, as bad as that which the Damned are in; so that if the Damned are in a State of Being, infinitely worse than not to be, as no Doubt they are; then so also were Mankind. And Mankind being actually brought into such a State by the Fall, is what renders the Grace of the Gospel, so inconceivable, so unspeakable in it's Greatness, and so absolutely free. To deny, that Mankind by the Fall were brought into such a State, is the same Thing in Effect as to deny original Sin, and undermine the glorious Grace of the Gospel.

Obj. *But how could God, consistent with his Perfections, put us into a State of Being, worse than not to be? or how can we ever thank God for such a Being?*

Ans. Our being brought into so bad an Estate was not owing to God, i. e. to any Fault in him, but merely to our selves, to our Apostacy from God. It was our Apostacy from God, that brought all this upon us, in Way of righteous Judgment. *Rom.* 5. 18, 19. Our being in so bad a State is no more owing to God, than theirs is who are now in Hell. They deserve to be in Hell, according to a Law that is holy, just and good; and we deserve to be in such a State, according to the Constitution made with *Adam*, which was also holy, just and good: and therefore the one may be consistent with the divine Perfections, as well as the other. It cannot be disagreeable to the Holiness, Justice, and Goodness of the divine Nature, to deal with Mankind according to a Constitution, in it's own Nature, holy, just, and good.

Now in as much as God did virtually give *Being* to all Mankind, when he *blessed* our first Parents, and said, *Be fruitful and multiply*; and in as much as *Being*, under the Circumstances that Man was then put in by God, was very desireable: we ought therefore to thank God for our *Being*, considered in this Light, and justify God in all the Evil that is come upon us for our Apostacy. For the Lord is righteous, and we are a guilty Race.

Those in Hell are in a State of Being, infinitely worse than not to be; and instead of thanking God for their Beings, they blaspheme his Name: but still there is no just Ground for their Conduct. They have no Reason to think

hard of God for damning them : they have no Reason to blame him : they have no Reason to esteem him e'er the less for it : he does what is fit to be done : His Conduct is amiable ; and he is worthy of being esteemed for doing as he does ; and all holy Beings will always esteem him for it. (*Rev.* 19. 1,—6.) Therefore the Damned ought to ascribe all their Evil to themselves, and justify God, and say, " He gave us Being, and it was a Mercy, and he deserves " Thanks ; but to us it is owing, that we are now in a State " infinitely worse than not to be : God is not to blame for " that ; nor is he the less worthy of Thanks for giving " us Being, and for all past Advantages which we ever " enjoyed : for the Law is holy, just and good, by and " according to which we suffer all these Things."

So here : Mankind by the Fall, were brought into a State of Being infinitely worse than not to be ; and were they but so far awake as to be sensible of it, they would no doubt all over the Earth murmur and blaspheme the God of Heaven. But what then ? There would be no just Ground for such a Conduct. We have no Reason to think hard of God, to blame him, or to esteem him e'er the less. What he has done, was fit and right ; his Conduct was beautiful ; and he is worthy to be esteemed for it. For that Constitution was holy, just and good, as has been proved. And therefore a fallen World ought to ascribe to themselves all their Evil, and to justify God, and say, " God " gave us Being under a Constitution holy, just and good ; " and it was a Mercy. We should have accounted it a " great Mercy, in case *Adam* had never fallen ; but God " was not to blame for this, nor therefore is he the less " worthy of Thanks. All that we suffer, is by and accord- " ing to a Constitution in it's own Nature holy, just and " good." Thus Mankind ought to have said, had God never provided a Saviour, but left all the World in Ruin. And thus ought they to have justified God's Conduct, laid all the Blame to themselves, and acknowleged that God deserved Praise from all his Works ; which, as they came out of his Hands, *were all very good.* Gen. 1. 31.

Obj. *But altho' we were by the Fall brought into such a State of Wrath and Condemnation, yet now we are delivered*

out

out of it by Christ; for as in *Adam* all die, so in CHRIST shall all be made alive.

ANS. Before Men believe in Christ, they are as justly exposed to divine Vengeance, as if Christ had never died. *Joh.* 3. 18, 36. And there is nothing to keep off Vengeance, one Moment, but sovereign Mercy; which yet they continually affront and provoke. *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. And they are so far from an Inclination to turn to God of their own Accord, that they are disposed to resist all the Means used to reclaim them. *Joh.* 3. 19. 'Tis true, God is ready thro' Christ to receive returning Sinners, and invites all to return thro' him. Thus God is good and kind to an apostate World, and offers us Mercy. God is not to blame that we are in so bad a Case: our Destruction is of our selves, and the Lord is righteous. — But still it is evident, we are in a perishing Condition, and shall certainly perish notwithstanding all that we of our own mere Motion shall ever do. If sovereign Grace don't prevent, there is no hope.

OBJ. *But if Mankind are thus by Nature Children of Wrath, in a State of Being worse than not to be, and even after all that Christ has done, are in themselves thus utterly undone; how can Men have a Heart to propagate their Kind? or account it a Blessing to have a numerous Posterity?*

ANS. 'Tis manifest by their Conduct, by their neglecting their Children's Souls, and caring only for their Bodies, that Parents in general do not propagate with any Concern about the spiritual and eternal Well-being of their Posterity. 'Tis probable, in general they are influenced by the same Motive that the brutal World be, together with a Desire to have Children under the Notion of a worldly Comfort, without scarce a Thought of what will become of their Posterity for Eternity.

As to *godly* Parents, they have such a Spirit of Love to God and Resignation to his Will, and such an Approbation of his Dispensations toward Mankind, and such a liking to his whole Scheme of Government, that they are content that God should govern the World as he does, and that he should have Subjects to govern, and that themselves and their Posterity should be under him, and at his

disposse. Nor are they without hopes of Mercy for their Children, from sovereign Grace thro' Christ, while they do thro' him devote and give them up to God, and bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord. And thus they quiet themselves as to their Souls. And now considering Children merely as to this Life, 'tis certain, that it is a great Comfort and Blessing to Parents, to have a promising Offspring.

As to *carnal* Men, since they are Enemies to God and to his holy Law, it is no wonder they are at Enmity against his whole Scheme of Conduct as Governour of the World. Did they understand how God governs the World, and firmly believe it, I doubt not, it would make all their native Enmity ferment to Perfection. They would wish themselves to be from under God's Government, and hate that he should ever have any Thing of theirs to govern. As soon as ever they enter into the eternal World, and see how Things really be, this will no doubt actually be their Case.— In a Word, if Men heartily like the original Constitution with *Adam*, as being in it's own Nature holy, just & good, this Objection will, upon mature Consideration, be no Difficulty with them; and if they do not, 'tis not any Thing that can be said, will satisfy them. But wicked Men's not liking the Constitution, does not prove it to be bad.

Obj. *It can't be thought a Blessing to have Children, if the most of them are like finally to perish.*

Ans. The most of *Abraham*'s Posterity, no doubt, for above these three Thousand Years, have been wicked and have perished; and God knew before-hand how it would be; and yet he promised such a numerous Posterity under the Notion of a great Blessing, *Gen.* 22. For considering Children merely as to this Life, they may be a great Blessing and Comfort to Parents, and an Honour to them: but it is very fitting, our Children should be God's Subjects, and under his Government: nor be they e'er the less Blessings to us as to this Life, because they must be accountable to God in the Life to come. They may be a great Comfort to us in this Life; and we are certain, God will do them no Wrong in the Life to come. All Men's murmuring

Thoughts

Thoughts about this Matter arise from their not liking God's Way of governing the World.

REM. 3. *Then do we begin to make a just Estimate of the Grace, the free, rich and glorious Grace of God, the great Governour of the World, displayed in the Gospel, when we consider Mankind, by and according to a Constitution and a Law, both of them holy, just and good, actually in such a ruined State.* Now we may begin a little to see the natural Import of those Words, *God so loved the World.* Such a World was it, that he loved and pitied. A World in so bad a State. A perishing World, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, altogether helpless and undone. And to have a Door opened by the Blood of Christ, for us to be raised from the Depth of such Ruin, is wonderful Grace indeed.—And in this Light does the Matter stand in Scripture-Account. For according to that, *By the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all to Condemnation, and by the Disobedience of one, many were made* (or constituted) *Sinners*, by Virtue of the original Constitution with *Adam.* * *Rom.* 5. 18, 19. And *all the World stood guilty before God*, by Virtue of their want of Conformity unto and Transgression of the Law of Nature or moral Law. *Rom.* 3. 9,—19. And hence Mankind were considered as being under *Sin*, and under the *Curse of the Law*, and under the *Wrath of God. Rom.* 3. 9. *Gal.* 3. 10. *Joh.* 3. 16. *Rom.* 1.18. And under this Notion Christ was appointed, to *save his People from their Sins*, Mat. 1. 21. to *deliver them from the Wrath to come*, 1 Thes. 1. 10. and to bring it to pass that whereas *by the Disobedience of one many were made Sinners, so by the Obedience of one many might be made righteous*, Rom. 5. 19. And hence the Gospel so mightily magnifies the *Grace* of God, his *Love* and *Goodness*, as being unparallel'd, unspeakable, inconceivable, passing Knowlege. *God so loved the World*, says *Christ. God commendeth his Love*, saith *Paul. Herein is Love*, says *John.* It has *Height* and *Length*, *Depth* and *Breadth.* It is *rich Grace*; and the *exceeding Riches of Grace.* And why? why is it so magnified and extolled? why, for this, among

 other

* *Constituted Sinners*, it is in the Original; for it was by Virtue of that primitive *Constitution* with *Adam*, that his first Sin laid all his Posterity under Sin, Guilt and Ruin.

other Reasons, because all this was done while *we did not love God*, while we were *Sinners*, while we were *Ungodly*, while we were *Enemies*, while we were *exposed to Wrath*, *guilty before God*, *perishing*, *lost*, *without Strength*. Thus God has represented it in his Word, his *Word* which is the *Image* of his Mind, and which shews us how he looks upon Things, and how they really are. See *Joh.* 3. 16, 36. *Rom.* 5. 6, 7, 8. 1 *Joh.* 4. 10. *Eph.* 1. 7. and 2. 7, 8. and 3. 19. *Mat.* 18. 11. *&c.*

Never therefore can a Sinner rightly understand the Gospel of Christ, or see his Need of the Provision therein made, or in any Measure make a just Estimate of the Grace of God therein displayed, until he is in some Measure convinced and made really sensible, by the Spirit of God, that he is actually in such a sinful, guilty, helpless, undone Condition. This therefore is absolutely necessary, in order to a genuine Compliance with the Gospel by Faith in Jesus Christ. *Luk.* 5. 31. *For the whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick.*—— And as this is requisite in order to the first Act of Faith; so for the same Reason must we all our Days live under a realising Sense of this our sinful, guilty, undone Estate, by Nature, and in our selves, in order to live by Faith. And this will make Christ precious, and the Grace of the Gospel precious; and effectually awaken us to Gratitude and Thankfulness; for now every Thing in our Circumstances, wherein we are better of it than the Damned, will be accounted so great a Mercy, and the Effect of mere Grace. And so far as we are from a clear Sight and realising Sense of this our sinful, guilty, undone Estate; so far shall we be insensible of the Preciousness of Christ, and the freeness of Grace, and the greatness of God's Mercy towards us.

Thus, having considered the *Grounds* upon which the most high God did look upon Mankind as being in a perishing Condition, and the *Motives* whereby he was excited to enter upon any Methods for their Recovery; we proceed now more particularly to consider the *Ways* and *Means* he has taken and used to bring it about.

Section

SECTION III.

Concerning the Nature and Necessity of SATISFACTION *for Sin.*

I am now,

III. To shew *what Necessity there was for a Mediator, and how the Way to Life has been opened by him whom God has provided.* It is plainly supposed, that there was a Necessity of a Mediator, and of such a one too as God has actually provided, in order to our Salvation; for otherwise it had been no *Love* or Goodness in God to have *given his only begotten Son.* For there can be no Love or Goodness in his doing that for us which we do not need, and without which we might have been saved as well. Nor is it to be supposed, that God would give his Son, to die for a guilty World, without *urgent Necessity.* If some cheaper & easier Way might have been found out, he would surely have spared his beloved Son: he had no Inclination to make light of his Son's Blood: it was a *great Thing* for a *GOD* to become *incarnate*, and *die*; and there must therefore have been some very urgent Considerations, to induce the wise Governour of the World to such an Expedient. And here then these Things may be particularly inquired into.

1. What Necessity was there of Satisfaction for Sin?

2. What Satisfaction has there been made? And wherein does it's Sufficiency consist?

3. How has the Way to Life been opened by the Means?

4. What Methods has the great Governour of the World entered upon, for the actual Recovery of sinful Creatures?

1. We are to consider *what Necessity there was of Satisfaction for Sin.* It was needful, or else no Satisfaction would have been ever required or made. And the Necessity was certainly very great and urgent, or the *Father* would never have been willing to have given his *Son*, or the Son to have undertaken the Work, a Work attended with so much Labour and Suffering. But why was it necessary? This, I think, will appear, if we deliberately and seriously weigh these Things.

(1.) *That God the great Creator, Preſerver, and abſolute Lord of the whole World, is, not only a Being of infinite Underſtanding and almighty Power, but alſo a Being infinite and unchangeable in all moral Propenſities: he loves Right and hates Wrong to an infinite Degree, and unchangeably: or in Scripture-Language, he thus loves Righteouſneſs and hates Iniquity.* By his infinite Underſtanding, he ſees all Things, as being what they really are. Whatſoever is fit and right, he beholds as being ſuch: and whatſoever is unfit and wrong, he alſo beholds as being ſuch. And as are his Views, ſo is the Temper of his Heart; he infinitely loves that which is fit and right, and infinitely hates that which is unfit and wrong. Or in other Words, he has an infinite Senſe of the moral Fitneſs & Unfitneſs of Things, and an anſwerable Frame of Heart. *i. e.* infinitely loves the one, and infinitely hates the other. From Eternity God has had an All-comprehenſive View of Things, of every Thing that was poſſible to be or that actually would be, and of all the Relations one Being would bear to another, and the Relation that all would bear to him, and has ſeen what Conduct would be right and fit in him towards them, and in them towards him and towards one another, and what would be wrong; and from Eternity it has been his *Nature*, infinitely to love that which is right, and hate that which is wrong. And this *his Nature* has influenced him in all his Conduct, as moral Governour of the World; and he has given ſo bright a Repreſentation of it, that this ſeems to be the firſt and moſt natural Idea of God that we can attain. It ſhines thro' all the Scriptures, thro' the Law and the Goſpel, and thro' his whole Conduct in a thouſand Inſtances.

God does not appear to be a Being influenced, acted, and governed by a groundleſs arbitrary Self-Will, having no Regard to right Reaſon, to the moral Fitneſs and Unfitneſs of Things: nor does he appear to be a Being governed and acted by a groundleſs Fondneſs to his Creatures. If a Thing is not right, he will not do it, merely becauſe he is above Controul, is the greateſt and ſtrongeſt, and can bear down all before him. *Gen.* 18. 25. And if a Thing is wrong, he will not connive at it, at all, becauſe it was acted by his Creatures, altho' ever ſo dear to him, and altho' the moſt exalted

exalted in Dignity, Honour and Priviledges. For Instance, the *sinning Angels*, *sinning Adam*, the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, his peculiar People. *Moses*, for speaking unadvisedly with his Lips, shall not enter into *Canaan*. *David*, the Man after his own Heart, he sinned; and *the Sword*, says God, *shall not depart from thy House*. Yea, he spared not his *own Son*, when he stood in the Room of Sinners. If he had been governed by any Thing like human Fondness, surely it would now have appeared. And besides, if that were the Case, he could never bear to see the Damned lie in the dreadful Torments of Hell to all Eternity. Indeed, by all he has said, and by all he has done, he appears to have an infinite Sense of the moral Fitness and Unfitness of Things, and an answerable Frame of Heart; and to be governed and actuated by this Temper, under the Direction of infinite Wisdom. Hence, as is his *Nature*, so is the *Name* which he has taken to himself, viz. The *HOLY ONE of Israel*.

It is true, he is a Being of infinite Goodness & Mercy; yet that is not a *fond*, but a *holy* Propensity, under the Government of infinite Wisdom: that is, he considers the Happiness and Good of his Creatures, his intelligent Creatures, as being what it is. He sees what it is worth, and of how great Importance it is; and how much to be desired, in it self, and compared with other Things: he sees it to be just what it really is, and has an answerable Disposition of Heart. *i.e.* Is desirous of their Happiness, and averse to their Misery, in an exact Proportion to the real Nature of the Things in themselves. It is true, so great is his Benevolence, that there is not any Act of Kindness or Grace so great, but that he can find in his Heart to do it, yea, has an infinite Inclination to do it; if, all Things considered, in his unerring Wisdom, he judges it fit and best. And yet at the same Time it is as true, such is the perfect Rectitude and spotless Purity of his Nature, that there is not any Act of Justice so tremendous, or any Misery so dreadful, but that he can find in his Heart, his Creatures Happiness notwithstanding, to do that Act of Justice, and inflict that Misery, if Need so require; yea, he has an infinite Inclination thereto. He regards their Happiness and Misery

fery as being what they are, of very great Importance in themſelves, but of little Importance compared with ſomething elſe. He had rather the whole Syſtem of intelligent Creatures ſhould lie in Hell to all Eternity, than do the very leaſt Thing, that is in it ſelf unfit and wrong. Yea, if it was put to his own Caſe, if we could poſſibly ſuppoſe ſuch a Thing, he would make it appear, that he does as he would be done by, when he puniſhes Sinners to all Eternity. It was in a Sort put to his own Caſe once, when his Son, who was as himſelf, ſtood in the Room of a guilty World; and his Heart did not fail him; but he appeared as great an Enemy to Sin then, as ever he did or will do to all Eternity. His treating his Son as he did in the Garden and upon the Croſs, immediately himſelf and by his Inſtruments, was as bright an Evidence of the Temper of his Heart, as if he had damned the whole World. He appeared what he was then, as much as he will at the Day of Judgment. He is infinite in Goodneſs; yet he is infinitely averſe to do any Act of Kindneſs, at the Expence of Juſtice, from mere Fondneſs to his Creatures.

And as his Goodneſs is not Fondneſs, ſo his Juſtice is not *Cruelty*. He infinitely hates that which is unfit and wrong, and is diſpoſed to teſtify that his hatred in ſome viſible publick Manner, by inflicting ſome proportionable Puniſhment. Not becauſe Sinners hurt him, and ſo make him angry and revengeful; for their Obedience can do him no good, nor their Diſobedience any hurt. *Job* 35.6,7. Nor indeed ſo much becauſe they hurt themſelves; for if they did wrong in no other Reſpect, he would never treat them with ſuch Severity. But this is the Truth of the Caſe; the great Governour of the World has an infinite Senſe of the moral Fitneſs and Unfitneſs of Things, and an anſwerable Frame of Heart. And ſo he infinitely loves that which is fit, and commands and rewards it; and infinitely hates the contrary, and forbids and puniſhes it.—Only it muſt be remembered, that the Rewards he grants to the good, are of mere Bounty as to them, becauſe they can deſerve nothing. *Rom.* 11. 35. But the Puniſhments he inflicts on the Wicked, are pure Juſtice, becauſe they deſerve all. *Rom.* 6. 23. For altho' Creatures cannot merit *Good* at the Hands of God, from whom

whom they receive all, and to whom they owe all; yet they can merit *Evil*. Nevertheless Rewards and Punishments are both alike in this Respect, *viz.* that they are visible publick Testimonies born by the Governour of the World, to the moral Amiableness of Virtue, on the one Hand, and to the moral Hatefulness of Vice, on the other. The one is not the Effect of Fondness, nor the other of Cruelty: but the one results from the Holiness and Goodness of the divine Nature, and the other from his Holiness and Justice. By the one, it appears how he loves Virtue, and how exceeding bountiful he is; and by the other, how he hates Sin, and how much he is disposed to discountenance it, by treating it as being what it is.

Thus, I say, in the first Place, we must consider God, the supreme Governour of the World, as a Being, not only of infinite Understanding and almighty Power, but also infinite and unchangeable in all moral Propensities: As one having a perfect Sense of the moral Fitness and Unfitness of Things, and an answerable Frame of Heart. Or in Scripture-Language, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty; the holy one of Israel. The Lord God gracious and merciful, but by no Means clearing the guilty. Of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity. Who loveth Righteousness and hateth Iniquity. Who renders to every one according to their Doings*, &c. —— Without a right Idea of God the supreme Governour of the World, and a realising living Sense of him on our Hearts, it is impossible we should rightly understand the Methods he has taken to open a Way for his Mercy to come out after a rebellious guilty World, or truly see into the Grounds of his Conduct, the Reasons of his doing as he has done. If we know God, and have a Taste for moral Beauty, we shall be in a Disposition to understand the Gospel; but otherwise we shall not. *Joh.* 7. 17. and 8. 47. For in the whole of this great Affair of our Redemption, he has acted altogether like himself.

(2.) *God is infinitely excellent, glorious and amiable, in being what he is.* His having such a Nature or Temper, and at the same Time being of infinite Understanding and almighty Power, renders him infinitely excellent, glorious and amiable, far beyond the Conceptions of any finite Mind.

Isai.

Isai. 6. 3. *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty, the whole Earth is full of thy Glory.*

Hence, *God loves, esteems and delights in himself infinitely.* Not indeed from what we call a selfish Spirit; for could we suppose there was another just what he is, and himself an Inferior, he would love, esteem and delight in that other, as entirely as he does now in himself. It is his being what is, that is the Ground of his Self-Love, Esteem & Delight.

Hence again, *He loves to act like himself*, in all his Conduct as moral Governour of the World, *as entirely as he loves himself*; and it is *as much contrary to his Nature*, to *counteract the Temper of his Heart*, in his publick Conduct, as to *cease to be what he is.* And the plain Reason is, that there is the same Ground for the one as for the other. He loves himself, because he is most excellent, in being, what he is: And for the same Reason, he loves to act like himself, because that is most excellent too. He cannot be willing to cease to be of that Temper or Nature he is of, because it is most excellent; and for the same Reason, he cannot be willing to counteract it, because it is most excellent to act agreeably to it in all Things. He is under Necessity to love himself; and he is under the same Necessity to act like himself. *Gen.* 18. 25. Hence it is a common Thing for God in great Earnestness to say in his Word, *I will do so and so, and they shall KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD.* As if he should say, "A guilty rebellious Race "may think and say what they will of me, yet I am what "I am, and I will act like my self, and all the World shall "know that I am the Lord, *i. e.* that I am what I pretend "to be: They shall know it by my Conduct, sooner or "later."

(3). *God cannot be said to act like himself, unless he appears, as great an Enemy to Sin, in his publick Government of the World, as he really is at Heart.* If his Conduct as moral Governour of the World, the whole being taken together, should look with a more favourable Aspect towards Sin, or appear less severe, than really he is; then it is self-evident that his Conduct would not be like himself, nor would it tend to exhibit a true Idea of him to all attentive Spectators in all his Dominions. If his Creatures and Subjects,

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in such a Case, should judge of his *Nature* by his *Conduct*, they would necessarily frame wrong Notions of the divine Being. And he himself must see and know, that he did not act like himself; nor appear in his Conduct to be what he was in his Heart.

But God, the supreme Governour of the World, does at Heart look upon Sin as an infinite Evil, and his Aversion and Enmity to it is infinite. He looks upon it, and (to speak of him after the Manner of Men) is affected towards it, as being what it really is. But it is infinitely wrong and wicked, for us not to love him with all our Heart and obey him in every Thing: The least Sin is an infinite Evil; and such he sees it to be, and as such does he abhor it.—— The infinite Evil of Sin does not consist in it's lessening God's essential Glory or Blessedness; for they are both independent on us, and far out of our Reach: nor does it consist merely in it's Tendency to make us miserable. But in it's own Nature it is infinitely wrong, in as much as we are under infinite Obligations to perfect Holiness. Our Obligations to love God with all our Heart, are in Proportion to his Amiableness; but that is infinite: not to do so therefore is infinitely wrong. But, as has been said, God has an infinite Sense of the moral Fitness and Unfitness of Things, and an answerable Frame of Heart. *i. e.* he infinitely loves that which is right, and infinitely hates that which is wrong. And therefore he infinitely hates the least Sin.

If therefore he acts like himself, he must in his publick Government of the World, his whole Conduct being taken together, appear in the most evident Manner to be an infinite Enemy to the least Sin. He must appear infinitely severe against it; and never do any Thing, which, all Things considered, seems to look at all with another Aspect.

(4.) *God the supreme Governour of the World can't be said to appear an infinite Enemy to Sin, and to appear infinitely severe against it, and that without the least Appearance of a favourable Aspect towards it, in his Conduct; unless he does always throughout all his Dominions, not only in Word threaten, but in Fact punish it, with infinite Severity, without the least Mitigation or Abatement, in any one Instance whatsoever.*

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If he ſhould never, in his Government of the World, ſay or do any Thing againſt Sin, it would ſeem as if he was a Friend to it, or at leaſt very indifferent about it. If he ſhould ſay and not do, threaten to puniſh, but never inflict the Puniſhment, his Creatures and Subjects might be tempted to ſay, "He pretends to be a mighty Enemy to Sin, and that is all." If he ſhould generally puniſh Sin with infinite Severity, but not always; there would at leaſt be ſome favourable Aſpect towards Sin, in his viſible Conduct. And his Subjects might be ready to ſay, "If he can ſuffer Sin "to go half unpuniſhed, why not altogether? and if altogether at one Time, why not at another? And if he "can abate the threatned Puniſhment in ſome Degree, in "ſome Inſtances; why not altogether, in all Inſtances? "If there is no abſolute Neceſſity that Sin ſhould be puniſhed, why does he ever puniſh it? But if it be abſolutely "neceſſary, why does he ever ſuffer it to go unpuniſhed?" It would ſeem at leaſt, by ſuch a Conduct, as if Sin was not ſo exceeding bad a Thing, but that it might eſcape Puniſhment ſometimes: and as if God was not ſuch an infinite unchangeable Enemy to it, but that he might be diſpoſed to treat it with a little Favour. In a Word, if God ſhould always puniſh Sins, not one excepted, and that throughout all his Dominions, and yet not do it always with *infinite Severity*; but in ſome Inſtances, one in a Million we'll ſay, ſhould abate a little, and but a very little; yet ſo much as he abates, be it more or leſs, ſo much does he treat Sin in a favourable Manner, and ſo much does he fall ſhort of treating it with due Severity, and ſo far does he appear in his Conduct from being an infinite unchangeable Enemy to it. So that it is very evident, that he cannot, in his Conduct as moral Governour of the World, appear an infinite unchangeable Enemy to Sin, without the leaſt Appearance to the contrary, in any other poſſible Way or Method, than by always puniſhing it with infinite Severity, without the leaſt Abatement, in any one Inſtance, in any Part of his Dominions, in Time or Eternity. And this would be to act like himſelf; and in and by ſuch a Conduct, he would appear to be what he is. But to do otherwiſe, would be to counteract his own Nature, and give a falſe

Repreſentation

Representation of his Heart, by a Conduct unlike himself.

Thus, it is the Nature of God, the great Governor of the World, in all his Conduct, to act like himself: But he can't be said to act like himself, unless he appears as great an Enemy to Sin and as severe against it, as he really is, without the least Shadow of the contrary: but his Conduct cannot appear in this Light, unless he does in Fact punish Sin with infinite Severity, thro'out all his Dominions, without the least Mitigation, in any one Instance, in Time or Eternity: therefore, it is the Nature of God, the Governour of the World, to do so: And therefore, he can no sooner, nor any easier, be willing, to let any Sin go unpunished, than he can, to cease to be what he is. * For, as was before proved, it is as impossible for him to act contrary to his own Nature, as it is to cease to be what he is: and he can consent to the one, as easily, as to the other.

Hence, we may learn, this is *really a Branch of the Law of Nature, That Sin should be punished:* it results from the Nature of God, the Governour of the World: it was no arbitrary Constitution: it did not result from the divine Sovereignty. It would, in the Nature of Things, have been no Evil, for *Adam* to have eaten of the *Tree of Knowlege*, had not God forbidden it; herein God exercised his sovereign Authority, as absolute Lord of all Things: But in threatning Sin with eternal Death, he acted not as a sovereign, but as a righteous Governour: his Nature prompted him to do so; he could not have done otherwise. As it is said in another Case, *It is impossible for God to lie*; so it may be said here, It is impossible for God to let Sin go unpunished. As he cannot go counter to himself *in speaking*, so neither *in acting*. 'Tis as contrary to his Nature, to let Sin go unpunished, as it is to lie; for his *Justice* is as much himself,

* God's mild and kind Conduct towards a guilty World at present, is nothing inconsistent with this; because Mankind are now dealt with in and thro' a Mediator, upon whom *our Sins have been laid*, and who has been *made a Curse* for us. In him, our Sins have been treated with infinite Severity, without the least Abatement. But for this, God's Conduct, no doubt, would be very inconsistent with his Perfections.

himself, as his *Truth*; and it is therefore equally impossible he should act contrary to either.

Hence, this Branch of the Law of Nature *is not capable of any Repeal or Abatement.* For since it necessarily results from the Nature of God the Governour of the World, it must necessarily remain in Force so long as God continues to be what he is. Besides, if God should repeal it, he must not only counteract his own Nature, but also give great Occasion to all his Subjects to think, he was once too severe against Sin, and that now he had altered his Mind, and was become more favourable towards it: Which he can no more be willing to do, than he can be willing actually to cease to be what he is. For as he loves himself perfectly for being what he is, so he perfectly loves to act like himself, and to appear in his Conduct just as he is in his Heart. Therefore our Saviour expressly asserts, *That Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one Jot or Tittle of the Law shall fail.* Matt. 5. 18.

(5.) *But all this notwithstanding, yet God did, of his infinite Goodness and sovereign Grace, entertain Designs of Mercy towards a fallen World, a rebellious, obstinate, stubborn, sinful, guilty, Hell-deserving Race, under the righteous Condemnation of the Law, a Law like himself, holy, just and good.* Particularly, he designed to declare himself reconcilable to this sinful, guilty World; to put Mankind into a new State of Probation; to try and see if they would repent and return unto him, and to use a Variety of Methods for their Recovery.— And to make Way for this, he designed to reprieve a guilty World, for a certain Space of Time, from that utter Ruin he had threatned; and to grant a Sufficiency of the good Things of this Life for their Support, while in a State of Probation: and he also purposed to grant a general Resurrection from the Dead, that those who should return to him and be reconciled, might be most compleatly happy in the World to come.——— And because he knew their Aversion to a Reconciliation, therefore he designed to use a Variety of external Means to bring them to it.— And because he knew that Mankind would be universally disposed to hate all such Means *(not liking to have God in their Knowlege)* and cast them off and get from under them, therefore he

he designed in his sovereign Grace to select some Part of Mankind, (the *Jews* for Instance) with whom, by his special Providence, by the more open or secret Workings of his almighty Power, such Means should be continued.—— And in the Fulness of Time, he purposed also to use equal, yea, greater Means with various Nations of the *Gentiles*.— And because he knew that all external Means notwithstanding, yet all with one Consent, would refuse to repent and convert and be reconciled, therefore he designed by his Providence and by the more common Influences of his Spirit, to take some farther Pains with many, and try them.—— And because he knew that this would never effectually perswade them, thro' the great Perverseness of Mankind; therefore he designed, by the special Influences of his holy Spirit, thro' his almighty Power and all-conquering Grace, all their Obstinacy notwithstanding, yet to reclaim and recover and bring Home to himself, a certain Number in this World; and here train them up for eternal Glory, and finally bring them thereunto: and all of his sovereign Goodness, and all to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace. —— And towards the latter End of that Space of Time, in which this World was to be reprieved, it was his Purpose more eminently to destroy Satan's Kingdom on Earth and his Influence among Mankind, and more generally recover the guilty Nations from his Thraldom, and set up his own Kingdom on Earth, to flourish in great Glory and Prosperity a Thousand Years. Such were his Designs, as is evident by the Event of Things, and from the Revelation he has made in his Word of what is yet to come to pass.

(6.) *But as the Case then stood, it was not fit, that any of these Favours should be granted to a guilty World; no, not any Thing, that had so much as (all Things considered,) the Nature of a Mercy, without some sufficient* Salvo *to the divine Honour.* * Indeed some Kind of Reprieve, I presume,

OBJ. *But if God could not, consistent with his Perfections, shew any Mercy to a guilty World without a sufficient* Salvo *to his Honour; how could he, consistent with his Perfections, provide them a Mediator? Was not this a great Mercy? And what* Salvo *had he for his Honour in doing of it?*

ANS. The very doing of this Thing itself was to secure his own Honour.

might have been granted to a guilty World, ſo as to have ſuffered the human Race to have propagated, and the whole deſigned Number to have been born; a Reprieve, all Things conſidered, not of the Nature of a Mercy. So the fallen Angels ſeem to be under ſomeKind of a Reprieve; for *they are reſerved in Chains*, to the Judgment of the great Day, as condemned Priſoners. 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. And hence, a Number of them once cried out, *Art thou come to torment us before theTime?* Matt. 8. 29. Yet we are not taught in Scripture to look upon this, as a Mercy to them.—— But the Scriptures teach us to conſider our Reprieve, our worldly Comforts, our Means of Grace, our Space for Repentance, the Reſtraints of Providence and the common Influences of the Spirit, as Mercies; yea, as great Mercies. *Rom.* 2. 4. *Iſai.* 5. 4. *Deut.* 10. 18. *Act.* 14. 17. *Rev.* 2. 21.—— All theſe common Favours therefore, as well as ſpecial and ſaving Mercies, were not proper to be granted to ſuch a guilty, Hell-deſerving World, by a holy, ſin-hating, ſin-revenging God. This was not to treat Mankind,as it was fit and meet they ſhould be treated. It was contrary to Law, that any Favour at all ſhould without a *Salvo* to the divine Honour, be granted them; for by Law they were all doomed to Deſtruction. And it was contrary to the divine Nature, to do anyThing in the Caſe,that, allThings conſidered, would have, in the leaſt Meaſure, a favourable Aſpect towardsSin; or ſo much as in the leaſt tend to make him ſeem leſs ſevere againſt it, than if he had damned the whole World for their Apoſtacy and Rebellion.

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nour. This was the very End he had nextly in View. Were it not for this End, a Mediator had not been needful; but a guilty World might have been pardoned by an Act of abſolute ſovereign Grace.---- Now his taking ſuch a glorious Method to ſecure his Honour, and the Honour of his Law and Government and ſacred Authority, had no Tendency to miſrepreſent them. He acted in it juſt like himſelf. His infinite Wiſdom, Holineſs, Juſtice and Goodneſs, are all at once moſt perfectly diſplayed in this Conduct of the ſupreme Governour of the World. Particularly, his infinite Hatred of Sin and Diſpoſition to puniſh it, appeared in the very Act of appointing his Son to be a Sacrifice for the Sins of the World. For in this Act, it was manifeſt,that he did chooſe, his own dearSon ſhould himſelf bear the Puniſhment of Sin, rather than let it go unpuniſhed.

If God had set aside his Law, which was the Image of his Heart, and undertaken and shewn all these Favours to a guilty World, without any Salvo to his Honour, his visible Conduct would have been directly contrary to the inward Temper of his Heart; and by it, he would have counteracted his Nature, and misrepresented himself, dishonoured his Law, rendered his Authority weak and contemptible, and opened a wide Door for the Encouragement of Rebellion, throughout all his Dominions; and in Effect gotten to himself the Character the Devil designed to give of him to our first Parents, when he said, *Ye shall not surely die. Gen.* 3. 4. i. e. "God is not so severe against Sin, as he "pretends to be, and as you think for, nor does he hate it "so much, nor will he do as he says in the Case." It was therefore infinitely impossible.

(7.) *To the End therefore, that a Way might be opened for him to put his Designs of Mercy in Execution, consistent with himself, consistent with the Honour of his Holiness & Justice, Law and Government and sacred Authority, something must be done by him in a publick Manner, as it were in the Sight of all Worlds, whereby his infinite Hatred of Sin and unchangeable Resolution to punish it, might be as effectually manifested as if he had damned the whole World.* MERELY his *saying*, that he infinitely hates Sin, and looks upon it worthy of an infinite Punishment, would not have manifested the inward Temper of his Heart in such a Meridian Brightness, as if he had damned the whole World *in very Deed.* But rather, his *saying* one Thing, and *doing* another directly contrary, would have been a going Counter to himself; especially, considering him as acting in the Capacity of a *Governour*, to whom by Office it belongs to put the Law in Execution and cause Justice to take Place. For him, first to make a Law threatning eternal Death to the least Sin, makes him appear infinitely just and holy; but then to have no Regard to that Law in his Conduct, but go right contrary to it, without any Salvo to his Honour, is quite inconsistent; and directly tends to bring Himself, his Law and Authority, into the greatest Contempt. Something, I say, therefore must be DONE, to make his Hatred of the Sin of Mankind and Disposition to punish it, as manifest as if he had damned

the whole World; to the End, the Honour of his Holiness and Justice, of his Law and Government and sacred Authority, might be effectually secured. To act contrary to his own Nature, was impossible; to have no Regard to the Honour of his Law and Government, was unreasonable; a guilty World had better all have been damned.

Thus from the Perfections of God, and from the Nature of the Thing, we see the Necessity there was, that Satisfaction should be made for Sin, in order to open an honourable Way in which divine Mercy might come out after a rebellious, guilty, Hell-deserving World.

To conclude this Head, The Necessity of Satisfaction for Sin seems also to be held forth in the Scriptures, and to be implied in God's Conduct in this Affair.——— In the Old Testament, the Necessity of an Atonement for Sin was taught in Types and Figures. The Man that sinned was to bring his Offering before the Lord, and lay his Hands upon it, and confess his Sin over it; and so, as it were, transfer his Sin and Guilt to it; then was it to be slain (*for Death is the Wages of Sin*) and burnt upon the Altar, (for the Sinner deserves to be consumed in the Fire of God's Wrath) and the Blood thereof was to be sprinkled round about; (*for without shedding of Blood there is no Remission*) nor was there any other Way of obtaining Pardon prescribed, but this, which naturally taught the Necessity of Satisfaction for Sin, and led the pious Jews to some general Notion of the great Atonement which God would provide, and to a cordial Reliance thereon for Acceptance in the Sight of God. *Lev.* 4. & 16. *Heb.* 9.—— But in the New Testament, the Nature and Necessity of Satisfaction for Sin, and the Impossibility of finding Acceptance with God, unless thro' the Atonement of Christ, is taught in Language very plain and express: particularly in the third Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*. St. *Paul* having proved both *Jews* and *Greeks* to be *under Sin*, and all the World *to be guilty before God*, and that *every Mouth must be stopped*, in the *first* and *second Chapters* and in the Beginning of the *third*, does, in the *next Place*, enter upon, and begin to explain, the Way of Salvation by free Grace thro' Jesus Christ: "We cannot," says he, "be justified by the Deeds of the Law;

(*Chap.*

" (*Chap.* 3. 20.) But it must be freely by Grace thro' the " Redemption that is in Jesus Christ. (*℣.* 24.)—But if we are " not justified by the Deeds of the Law, by our own Obe- " dience, how will God our Judge appear to be righteous ? " If the Law condemns us and yet he justifies us, i. e. if he " thus proceeds contrary to Law, to clear and approve, " when that condemns; how will he appear to be a just " and upright Governour and Judge, who loving Righte- " ousness and hating Iniquity, is disposed always to render " to every one his Due ? — Why,— there is a Way con- " trived, wherein the Righteousness of God is manifested " in our Justification without the Law's being obeyed by " us, a Way unto which the Types of the Law and Pre- " dictions of the Prophets did all bear Witness, a Way in " which the Righteousness of God is manifested in and by " Christ: (*℣.* 21, 22.) — But how ? — Why, God hath " *set him forth to be a Propitiation, to declare his Righteous-* " *ness for the Remission of Sins that are past, thro' the For-* " *bearance of God; to declare, I say, at this Time his Righ-* " *teousness: THAT HE MIGHT BE JUST, and the* " *Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*" The Apostle seems evidently to suppose, that God *could not have been just*, had he not thus declared his Righteousness; and that he actually took this Method to declare and manifest his Righteousness, *to the End he might be just*, might act agreeable to his Nature, the original Standard of Justice, and to his Law, which is the Transcript of his Nature, and the established Rule of Righteousness, between him our Governour, and us his Subjects. He set forth his Son *to be a Propitiation, for the Remission of Sin, to declare his Righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier &c.*

Besides, The Necessity of Satisfaction for Sin, and that even by the Death of Christ, seems to be implied in our Saviour's Prayer in the Garden, *If it be possible, let this Cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt*, Mat. 26. 39. And again, *℣.* 42. *O my Father, if this Cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy Will be done.* As if Christ had said, " If it be possible thy Designs of " Mercy might be put into Execution, and poor Sinners " saved, consistent with thine Honour, without my drink-

" ing this Cup, O that it might be: but if it is not poſſi-
" ble it ſhould be ſo, I conſent." Satisfaction for Sin being neceſſary, and there being no eaſier Way in which Satisfaction for Sin might be made, and a Door opened for Mercy to come to a guilty World conſiſtent with the divine Honour, ſeems to have been the very Ground, of the Father's willing him, and of Chriſt's conſenting, to drink that Cup. And indeed, is it poſſible to conceive, why Chriſt ſhould be willing to ſuffer what he did, or why his Father ſhould deſire it, were it not an Expedient abſolutely neceſſary, and nothing elſe would do, ſo that, it muſt be, or not one of the Race of *Adam* be ever ſaved, conſiſtent with the divine Honour? If it was not ſo abſolutely neceſſary, if there was ſome cheaper and eaſier Way that would have done, why did the Father will this? or how had Chriſt a ſufficient Call to undertake it? or indeed what Need was there for him to undertake? or what Good would it do? If Sin was not in very Deed, ſo bad a Thing, that it could not be pardoned without ſuch a Satisfaction, why was ſuch a Satisfacton inſiſted upon? Why a greater Satisfaction than was needful? Could a holy and wiſe God ſet ſo light by the Blood of his dear Son, as to deſire it to be ſhed without the moſt urgent Neceſſity? Or why ſhould the Governour of the World make more Adoe than needs, and then magnify his Love in giving his Son, when Mankind might have been ſaved without it? Did this become the great Governour of the World? Or would God have us look upon his Conduct in ſuch a Light? Surely no. — Verily therefore, ſuch was the Caſe of a rebellious guilty World, that God looked upon them too bad to be releaſed, conſiſtent with the divine Honour, from the threatned Deſtruction, unleſs ſuch a Mediator ſhould interpoſe, and ſuch a Satisfaction for Sin be made; and therefore Chriſt acquieſced in his Will, as being wiſe, holy, juſt and good.— And this being ſuppoſed, the Love of God in giving his Son appears even ſuch as it is repreſented to be; unparallel'd, unſpeakable, inconceivable: ſo alſo does the Love of Chriſt in undertaking.—And thus from the Perfections of God, and from the Scriptures, and from God's Conduct in this Affair, it appears that a full Satisfaction for Sin was

neceſſary

necessary, in order to it's being pardoned, or any Favour shewn to a guilty World, consistent with the divine Honour.

And if we, in very Deed, did stand in such Need, such an absolute perishing Need of a Mediator, as this comes to; if God looked upon Things in such a Light; then must we see this our Need of a Mediator, and look upon Things in this Light too, and have a Sense of this great Truth upon our Hearts: for otherwise we neither truly understand what a State we are in, nor what Need we have of a Mediator. And if we do not truly understand what a State we are in, nor our Need of the Mediator God has provided, how can we be in a Disposition to receive him as he is offered in the Gospel, and truly & understandingly to rely upon him, his Death and Sufferings, his Worth and Merits, his Mediation and Intercession, as the Gospel invites us to do?

To see our Need of Christ to be our Atonement, to see our Need of his propitiatory Sacrifice to open the Way for the Governour of the World to be reconciled to us consistently with his Honour, is a very different Thing from what many imagine. Some fancy, they want Christ to purchase an Abatement of the Law, and satisfy for their Imperfections; and then they hope to procure the divine Favour by their own Goodness. — Some trust in Christ and the free Grace of God thro' him, as they think, and yet at the same Time look upon God as obliged in Justice to save them, if they do as well as they can. Some, who lay not so high a Claim to the divine Favour, yet by their Tears & Prayers hope to move the Compassions of God, and by their fair Promises to engage his Favour, and would secretly think it hard, if after all, God should cast them off; and yet they pretend to see their Need of Christ and to trust in him. But these are all evidently so far from seeing their Need of Christ, that in the Temper and Exercises of their Hearts, they implicitly and practically deny any Need of him at all; to their own Sense, they are good enough to be accepted in the Sight of God upon their own Account. *Rom.* 10. 3.— Others, who have had great Awakenings and Convictions,

ſee much of their own Badneſs, and do in a Sort renounce their own Righteouſneſs, they look to be ſaved by free Grace; but in all the Exerciſes of their Hearts, ſee no Need of a Mediator, and have nothing to do with him: They ſee no Reaſon why they may not be pitied and ſaved by free Grace, without any Reſpect to the Atonement of Chriſt. They don't underſtand that they are ſo bad, that it would be a Reproach to the Governour of the World, to ſhew them Mercy otherwiſe than thro' a Mediator. — Others again, who talk much of Chriſt, and of Faith, and of living by Faith, and cry down Works, and think themſelves moſt evangelical; yet after all, *only believe that Chriſt died for them in particular, and that they ſhall be ſaved:* this is their *Faith*, and this their *truſting* in Chriſt; whereby it is evident, they never truly ſaw their Need of Chriſt, nor have they any Reſpect to him under the proper Character of a Mediator. But then do Perſons ſee their Need of Chriſt, when from a Senſe of what they be, and of what God is, they are convinced, that they are too bad to be pardoned and accepted, ſo bad that any Thing ſhort of Damnation is too good for them; ſo that it would be inconſiſtent with the divine Perfections and to the Reproach of the great Governour of the World, to ſhew them any Favour, without ſome ſufficient Salvo to his Honour. Now they ſee their Need of Chriſt and are prepared to exerciſe *Faith in his Blood* (to uſe the Apoſtle's Phraſe, *Rom.* 3. 23.) and not 'till now. For Men can't be ſaid to ſee their Need of Chriſt and his Atonement, unleſs they ſee *that* in their Caſe, which renders his Atonement *needful*; but it's being inconſiſtent with the divine Perfections, and to the Diſhonour of God, to pardon Sin without Satisfaction, was *that* which made an Atonement *needful:* Therefore Sinners muſt ſee their Caſe to be ſuch as that it would be inconſiſtent with the divine Perfections and to the Diſhonour of God, to grant them Pardon without Satisfaction for their Sins; in order to ſee their Need of Chriſt and of his Atonement. When they ſee their Caſe to be ſuch, then they begin to ſee Things as they are, to view them in the ſame Light that God does, to perceive upon what Grounds and for what Reaſons a Mediator was neceſſary,

necessary, and why and upon what Accounts they want one; and hereby a Foundation is laid for them understandingly to have a fiducial Recourse to that Mediator which God has provided, that thro' him, consistently with the divine Perfections, they may be receiv'd to Favour. And so from Christ the Mediator, and from the free Grace of God thro' him, do they take all their Encouragement to come to God in hopes of Pardon & Acceptance and eternal Life. And thus they look *to be justified by free Grace thro' the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, which is what the Gospel intends and proposes. *Rom.* 3. 24. And from an increasing Sense of their Unworthiness and ill Deserts, they, thro' the Course of their Lives, more and more, grow up into a Disposition to *live the Life they live in the Flesh by Faith in the Son of God*, always having Respect to him as their *great high Priest*, in all their Approaches to the *Mercy-Seat*, having *Access to God by him*, who has stiled himself the *Door of the Sheep*, and *the Way to the Father*, which is the very Thing the Gospel proposes, & invites & encourages us unto. Heb. 9. 12. *By his own Blood he entred into the holy Place, having obtained eternal Redemption for us.* Ver. 24. *Into Heaven it self, to appear in the Presence of God for us.* Heb. 10. 19—22. *Having therefore, Brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and living Way which he hath consecrated for us;—and having an high Priest over the House of God: let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith.* Rom. 3. 25. *For him hath God set forth to be a Propitiation for Sin, to declare his Righteousness, that he might be just, &c.*

And a clear realising Sense of these Things on our Hearts, will lay a Foundation for us to see, how the Gospel-Way of Salvation is calculated to bring much Glory to God, and abase Sinners in the very Dust, which is that wherein the Glory of the Gospel very much consists. *Rom.* 3. 27. *Eph.* 1. 3—12. And we shall learn to rejoyce to see God alone exalted, and freely to take our proper Place, and lie down in the Dust, abased before the Lord for ever. And indeed it is perfectly fit in this Case, that the Rebel-Wretch should come down, and be so far from finding Fault with the

the great Governour of the World, and with his holy, juſt and good Law, that he ſhould rejoyce that God has taken ſuch an effectual Method to ſecure his own Honour, and the Honour of his Law. We ought to be glad with all our Hearts, that the ſupreme Governour of the World did put on State, and ſtand for his Honour, and the Honour of his Law, without the leaſt Abatement; and did inſiſt upon it, that Sin ſhould be puniſhed, the Sinner humbled, and Grace glorified: theſe were Things of the greateſt Importance. And we ought to chooſe to be ſaved in ſuch a Way, to have God honoured, and our ſelves humbled. And it is evident, this muſt be the Temper of every one that comes into a genuine Compliance with the Goſpel. Thus much concerning the Neceſſity of Satisfaction for Sin.

But here now ſome may be ready to inquire,

Was it not as neceſſary, that the Precepts of the Law ſhould be obeyed, as that the Penalty ſhould be ſuffered; to make Way for the Sinner not only to be pardoned, but alſo to be received to a State of Favour and intitled to eternal Life?

To which I anſwer,

1. It is true, we need not only a Pardon from the Hands of God the ſupreme Governour of the World, in whoſe Sight, and againſt whom we have ſinned; we need, I ſay, not only to be pardoned, delivered from Condemnation, freed from the Curſe of the Law, ſaved from Hell; but we want ſomething further: We want to be renewed to God's Image, taken into his Family, put among his Children; and made Partakers of his everlaſting Favour and Love. We need not only to be delivered from all thoſe *Evils*, which are come upon us and which we are expoſed unto, thro' our Apoſtacy from God; but we want to be reſtored to the Enjoyment of all that *Good*, which we ſhould have had, had we kept the Covenant of our God.

2. It is true alſo, that Mankind, according to the Tenour of the firſt Covenant, were not to have been confirmed in a State of Holineſs and Happineſs, were not to have had eternal Life, merely upon the Condition of being innocent, (for ſuch was *Adam* by Creation) but perfect Obedience to every Precept of the divine Law was required. *Rom.* 10.5. *Gal.* 3. 10. The Performance of ſuch an Obedience, was

that

that Righteousness, which was by Covenant to intitle him to Life.

3. Since the Fall, all Mankind, are destitute of *that Righteousness*, nor can they attain unto it. *Rom.* 3. 9——20.

4. But our natural Obligations, to love God with all our Hearts and obey him in every Thing, still remain. For they are in their own Nature unalterable. They will be for ever the same, so long as God remains what he is and we are his Creatures. There was the same Reason, therefore, after the Fall, why we should love and obey God, as ever there was. There was the same Reason, therefore, that the Condition of the first Covenant, should be fulfilled, as ever there was. It was reasonable, originally, or God would never have insisted upon it. And therefore it is reasonable now since our Apostacy; and God has the same Grounds to insist upon it as ever: but we cannot perform it our selves: it was necessary, therefore, that it should be performed by Christ our Surety.

But perhaps some may still say,

When Christ had fully satisfy'd for all our Sins, and so opened a Way for Believers to be considered as entirely free from any Guilt; why might not the Governour of the World, now, of his sovereign Goodness and Bounty, have bestowed eternal Life, without any more to do? What Need was there for Christ to fulfil all Righteousness in our Room?

To which I answer,

When *Adam* was newly created, he was innocent, free from any Guilt; and why might not the supreme Governour of the World, now, without any more to do, have bestowed upon him eternal Life and Blessedness, of his mere sovereign Goodness? What need was there, that his everlasting Welfare should be entirely suspended upon the uncertain Condition of his good Behaviour? Had not God just seen how it turned out with the Angels that sinned? Did he not know that *Adam* was liable to Sin and undoe himself too? And why would he run any venture a second Time? Especially, since the Happiness, not only of *Adam*, but of all his Race, a whole World of Beings, now lay at Stake? If he thinks, that if but one Man should gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul, his Loss would

would be infinitely great; what must the everlasting Welfare of a whole Race be worth in his Account? And would infinite Wisdom and infinite Goodness venture and hazard all this *needlessly?* Yea, would such a Being have done so, had there not been Reasons, *of infinite Weight*, to move him to it? something of greater Importance, than the eternal Welfare of all Mankind?—— No doubt, there was something, and something of very great Importance, that influenced the infinitely wise and good Governour of the World to such a Conduct. Something, so *very great*, as to render his Conduct in that Affair, perfectly holy and wise, perfectly beautiful, excellent and glorious.—— It does not look like a mere arbitrary Constitution. It was doubtless ordered so, because God saw, it was perfectly fit and right and best.—— But why was it fit and right and best?—— Whatever the Reason was, doubtless for the same Reason, it was fit and right and best, that the *second Adam* should perform the same Condition, fulfil all Righteousness, to the End that by his Obedience we might be made righteous, and so be intitled to Life in this Way.

It is certain, that eternal Life and Blessedness were not to have been given *absolutely*, i. e. without any Condition at all, under the first Covenant. Eternal Life was not to have been granted merely under the Notion of a *Gift*, from a *sovereign Benefactor*; but also under the Notion of a *Reward*, from the Hands of the *moral Governour* of the World. Perfect Obedience was the Condition. *Do and live.* Rom. 10. 5. *Disobey and die.* Gal. 3. 10. This was established by the Law of the God of Heaven.

Now, the supreme Governour of the World did this for some End, or for no End. Not for no End, for that would reflect upon his Wisdom. Was it for his own Good, or his Creature's Good? Not for his own Good; for he is Self-sufficient and Independent. Not for his Creature's Good; for it had been better for them, their Interest simply considered, to have had eternal Life and Blessedness given absolutely and unconditionally; for then, they would have been at no Uncertainties, not liable to fall into Sin or Misery, but secure and safe forever.—— It remains, therefore, that, as moral Governour of the World, he had an Eye to the

the moral Fitness of Things, and so ordained, because in it self, in it's own Nature, it was fit and right.

But why was it fit and right? *i. e.* What Grounds and Reasons were there in the Nature of the Case, why the great Governour of the World should suspend the everlasting Welfare of his Creature, Man, upon Condition of his being in most perfect Subjection to himself?—— *i.e.* Why should he so much stand upon his own Honour, as to insist upon this Homage, at the hazard of his Creature's everlasting Welfare.—*i. e.* Why did he look upon his own Honour as a Matter of so great Importance?—— I answer, that, from the Rectitude of the divine Nature, he is perfectly impartial in all his Conduct.—— It was not, therefore, from any Thing like Pride, or a selfish Spirit, that he stood thus upon his Honour; the Homage of a Worm of the Dust could do him no Good: nor for want of Goodness, that he set so light by his Creature's Happiness: but it was fit he should do as he did; the Rectitude of his Nature, as it were, obliged him to it. For it becomes the Governour of the World, and it belongs to his Office as such, to see to it, that every one has his proper Due; and therefore it concerns him, first and above all Things, to assert and maintain the Rights of the GOD-HEAD: and this Honour was due to God.

He was by Nature God, and *Adam* was by Nature Man; he was the Creator, and *Adam* was his Creature; he was moral Governour of the World, and *Adam* was his Subject: He was by Right Law-giver, and *Adam* was a free Agent capable of and obliged unto perfect Obedience: He was Judge, to whom it belonged to distribute Rewards and Punishments, and *Adam* was an accountable Creature. Now he only considered himself as being what he was, and his Creature Man as being what he was; and he was affected and acted accordingly. He considered what Honour was due to him from Man; what Obligations Man was under to give him his Due; that he was capable of doing it voluntarily; that it was fit he should; that it became the Governour of the World to insist upon it; that if he did not do it with all his Heart, he could not be considered as a Subject fit for the divine Favour, but fit only for di-

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vine Wrath. He thus viewed Things as they were, and acted accordingly. What he did therefore was perfectly right and fit. To have had no Regard to his Honour, but only to have consulted his Creature's Welfare, would have been a Conduct like theirs in Rom. 1.21,25. *They glorified him not as God.—They worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator.* *

Now, since the *second Adam* becomes Surety and stands responsible to the Governour of the World, it was fit he should not only suffer the Penalty of the broken Law, but obey it's Precepts too, in order to open a Door for us not only to be pardoned, but also received to Favour and intitled to eternal Life. There was the same Reason, the *second Adam* should do it, as that the *first* should. The Honour of God did as much require it. It was as needful in order to our being considered as Subjects fit for the divine Favour and eternal Life. It became the Governour of the World as much to stand for his Honour, with one, as with the other; and he had as good Reason to suspend the everlasting Welfare of Mankind upon this Condition, now, as ever. And to have shewn no Concern for the divine Honour, altho' God had been openly affronted and despised by Man's Apostacy, but only to have regarded and consulted the Wel-

* How God's putting *Adam* into a State of *Trial*, was consistent with his aiming merely at his Happiness as his *last End*, I cannot understand. Sure I am, it must have been better, unspeakably better for *Adam*, his Interest only considered, to have been immediately *confirmed* in a State of perfect Holiness & Happiness, without running such an awful Venture of eternal Ruin and Destruction. Nor is there any Man on Earth, that would choose, merely out of Regard to his own Welfare, to be put into a State of Trial, rather than into a State of confirmed Holiness and Happiness, such as the Saints in Heaven are now in. And therefore I can't but think, that God had a greater Regard to something else, than to *Adam's* Happiness. In this Instance, it seems plain *from Fact*, that God does not make his Creature's Happiness, his last End. It is in vain to plead, "That *Adam* could not be a *moral Agent*, "unless he was a *free Agent*, nor a *free Agent* without being *liable* "to Sin."----For the Saints in Heaven are *moral Agents* & *free Agents* too, and yet are not *liable* to Sin.--- And if God's putting his Creatures into a State of Trial, is not consistent with his aiming merely at their Happiness as his last End, then the whole Tenor of God's moral Government is not consistent therewith: for, from first to last, it has been his Way to put his Creatures into a State of Trial; even all his Creatures who were capable of moral Government.

Welfare of the Rebel under righteous Condemnation, had been a Conduct evidently unbecoming the great Governour of the World.

But again, we may view the Case in another Point of Light.—— According to the first Covenant, eternal Life and Blessedness were not to have been granted merely under the Notion of a *Gift*, from a *sovereign Benefactor*; but also under the Notion of a *Reward*, from God as *moral Governour* of the World: and perfect Obedience was the Condition. *Do* and *live.*—— And while eternal Life and Blessedness were thus promised, by Way of *Reward* to *Virtue*, God's infinite Love thereto was hereby testified; and the Temper of his Heart acted out and displayed.—— But God infinitely loves to act like himself.— On this Consideration, therefore, it was necessary, that the *second Adam* should fulfil all Righteousness, in the Room of a guilty, unholy World; to the End, that the Governour of the World might bestow Grace and Glory and all good Things upon Sinners, as a *Reward* to Christ's *Virtue*; and so hereby testify his infinite Love to *Virtue.*—— *And so still act like himself.*—— It was God's sovereign Pleasure to exercise his infinite Goodness towards a ruin'd Race, and his *holy* Nature prompted him to choose this Way; for he always takes infinite Delight in shewing Regard and Respect to *Virtue*, in his moral Government of the World. He translated *Enoch* and *Elijah*, saved *Noah* from the general Deluge, delivered *Lot* out of *Sodom*, promised *Abraham* a Posterity numerous as the Stars of Heaven, and *Phineas* an everlasting Priesthood, and a Thousand Things more has he done; and all, to bear a *publick Testimony* of his *Love* to *Virtue*. *This is the Thing which the King delights to Honour.*—— The very Ground of his Love to himself, is the *Virtue* or Holiness of his Nature. In this, his divine Beauty and Glory primarily consists. *Isai.* 6.3. He loves, therefore, to put Honour upon the *Image* of himself. And in doing so, he still reflects Honour upon himself, the original Fountain of *moral Excellency*. And, therefore, according to the *first Covenant* and according to the *second*, it was equally fit, that eternal Life and Blessedness should be given as a *Reward* to *Virtue*, in Testimony of his Regard thereto.

Thus,

Thus, from the Perfections of God, and the Reaſon and Nature of Things, the Neceſſity of Chriſt's obeying the preceptive Part of the Law, as well as ſuffering the Penalty, in order to our being not only pardoned, but received to the everlaſting Favour of God and intitled to eternal Life, ſeems evident.

But from *Scripture*, the Point may more eaſily be confirmed. For therein we are taught, that he was appointed by the Governour of the World, not only to *make Reconciliation for Iniquity*, but alſo to *bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs*. Dan. 9. 24. And are aſſured, that he is become *the End of the Law for Righteouſneſs to them that believe*. Rom 10. 4. And that *by his Obedience many are made Righteous*. Rom. 5. 19. But this Work would not have been put upon him, had it been needleſs; *i. e.* if God's Honour and our Salvation, could, both, have been ſecured without it: for then it had been in vain: Which to ſuppoſe, reflects much upon the divine Wiſdom, and quite undermines and nullifies the Love and Grace and Kindneſs of God herein to us: for we had been as well without it.——With much Evidence, therefore, may we conclude, that it was neceſſary, that the *ſecond Adam*, Chriſt our Surety, ſhould *obey*, as well as ſuffer in our Room; in order to open a Door for our Juſtification and eternal Life.— And accordingly we may obſerve, that the Favours ſhewn to a ſinful, guilty World on Chriſt's Account, are in Scripture promiſed under the Notion of a *Reward* to Chriſt's *Virtue*. For upon making *his Soul an Offering for Sin*, which was the higheſt *Act of Virtue*, it was promiſed that *he ſhould ſee his Seed, prolong his Days, have the Pleaſure of the Lord proſpering in his Hands*; and that he ſhould *ſee the Travel of his Soul*, and *juſtify many*. Iſai. 53. 10, 11, 12.

Therefore, in order to a genuine Compliance with the Goſpel by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt, we muſt ſee how far we be from *Righteouſneſs*; that all our ſeeming Righteouſneſs is as filthy Rags; that we have nothing to recommend us to God; that there is nothing in us rendring of us *fit* to be beloved by him, or *meet* to receive any Favour at his Hands, but every Thing to the contrary; to the End, we may ſee our Need of Chriſt: of Chriſt, *to be made of God unto us, Righteouſneſs*,

teousness, (1 Cor. 1. 30.) and our Necessity of being *found in Him, having on his Righteousness.* (Phil. 3. 9.) For this is the Design of the Gospel, to bring us to look *to be accepted* with God *only in his Beloved*; (Eph. 1. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5.) and to be *justified freely by his Grace, thro' the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ*; (Rom. 3. 24.) *without the Deeds of the Law*; (*v.* 28.) our selves being considered, as being in our selves, *UNGODLY*. (Chap. 4. *v.* 5.)

And under a Sense, how far we be from Righteousness; that we have, after all the Attainments of this Life, no Righteousness fit to be mentioned before God, nothing fit to recommend us to his Favour, but are still in our selves infinitely unworthy of his Love, or the least Favour from him; I say, under a deep effectual Sense of this, we must live all our Days; to the End, we may never venture to come before God, as the *Pharisee* did, emboldened by our own Goodness, but always as the chief of Sinners, desiring to be *found only in Christ, not having on our own Righteousness, but the Righteousness which is of God by Faith*; and so hereby be influenced to *live the Life we live in the Flesh, by Faith on the Son of God*, as St. *Paul* always did, and as the Gospel would have all others do too. 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *Phil.* 3. 9. *Gal.* 2. 20. and 3. 11.

To conclude. Thus, we see the Grounds of the Necessity there was, for a Mediator and Redeemer, to make Satisfaction for Sin, and bring in everlasting Righteousness; and so open an *honourable* Way, for Mercy to come out after a rebellious, guilty World; and a Way, in which Sinners may with *Safety* return to God.

Section IV.

Concerning the Sufficiency *of Christ, and of his Satisfaction and Merits.*

I proceed now to consider,

2. *What has been done to make Satisfaction for Sin, and to answer the Demands of the preceptive Part of the Law; and wherein the Sufficiency of the same consists.* And

In the *First* Place, what *has been done*, has been already hinted; and it may be summed up in a few Words. It comprehends all that Christ has *done* and *suffered*, in his *Life* and at his *Death*. For us he was born; for us he lived; for us he died: He did all *on our Account*, being thereunto appointed by his Father. But because his Obedience and Sufferings were most eminent and remarkable, when, according to the Command he had received of his Father, he laid down his Life for us and offered himself a Sacrifice for our Sins; and because with a View to this, he *became Flesh, and dwelt among us*; therefore, the Scriptures do more frequently attribute our Redemption to what was done *then*. Hence, we are said to be *redeemed by his Blood*. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. To be *justified by his Blood*. Rom. 5. 9. And all spiritual Blessings are frequently represented as the Fruits and Effects of his *Death*. Gal. 3. 13, 14. The Sacrifices of the Old Testament pointed out *this*, as the great Atonement. And to *this* the Penmen of the New Testament seem in a special Manner to have their Eyes, as the great Propitiation for Sin.— Thus the *first Adam* was to have yielded a perfect Obedience to the divine Law in every Thing; but that special Prohibition, touching the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, was in a peculiar Manner to try him, that it might be seen whether he would be in Subjection to God in every Thing. So in the Garden and upon the Cross, our Saviour's Spirit of Obedience was tried and discovered, and his Obedience was perfected and his Sufferings compleated: and so here, in a more eminent Manner, the Law was honoured and Justice satisfied; and so the Door of Mercy opened for a sinful, guilty World. But

Secondly. As to the *Sufficiency* of what has been done, to answer the Ends proposed; Let these Things be considered,

(1.) That the Person undertaking, as Mediator and Redeemer, was of sufficient Dignity and Worth.

(2.) That he was sufficiently authorized to act in such a Capacity.

(3.) That what he has done is perfectly suited, in it's own Nature, to answer all the Ends proposed.

(1.) *Jesus Christ the Mediator between God and Man, as to his Person, was FIT for the mediatorial Office and Work.*

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He was of sufficient Dignity and Worth; being by *Nature GOD, equal with the Father, the Brightness of his Glory, the express Image of his Person.* Phil. 2. Heb. 1. He was *God,* (Joh. 1. 1.) as well as *Man.* (℣. 14.) And therefore his Blood was considered and valued, as being *the Blood of God.* (Act. 20. 28.) And hence it is called *precious Blood.* (1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.) As to his Person, he was equal with God the Father in Point of Worth and Dignity: And it was as much for him to obey and die in the Room of a guilty World, as it would have been, for *God the Father* himself. In Point of Dignity and Worth, there was none superiour to him. He was upon a Level with *God the Father.* He was his *Equal* and *Fellow.* Zech. 13. 7. *Awake, O Sword,—against the Man that is my FELLOW.* He was as glorious, as honourable, as lovely. He was therefore fit for the Office, able to answer all the Ends of God the Governour of the World, of his Holiness and Justice, Law and Government, and perfectly to secure the divine Honour, viewed in every Point of Light. The infinite Dignity of his Nature as God, made him capable of an Obedience of infinite moral Excellency; and capable of making a full Satisfaction for the infinite Evil of Sin. He could magnify the Law and make it honourable, in a more illustrious Manner, than all the Angels in Heaven and Men on Earth put together; by how much he was more excellent than them all. If the Son of God obeys and dies, it is enough: God and his Law are for ever secure. Thus, his being by Nature GOD, rendered him of sufficient Dignity for the Office and Work of a Mediator. *Heb.* 9. 14.

And *this* it was also, which made him capable of undertaking. As he was *God,* he was under no Obligations, on his own Account, to obey a Law made for a Creature; and he had an absolute Right to himself. Every Person, that is a mere Creature, is under natural Obligations to perfect Obedience on his own Account; nor is he his own to dispose of. But the *Son of God* was above a mere Creature, he was a divine Person, and previous to his Undertaking was under no Obligation to Obedience; he had an original Right to himself, and was not by Nature under the Law; he was, therefore, at his own Disposal, and at full Liberty

to undertake in our Room. He had Power to assume human Nature, & be made under the Law for us, & obey for us, and suffer for us; for he might do what he would with his own. *Joh.* 10.17, 18.—The Sufficiency of Christ being thus originally founded in his Divinity; Hence, this is the first Thing the Apostle to the *Hebrews* insists upon, in order to explain, clear up and confirm the Safety of the Way of Salvation thro' his Blood. *Heb.* 1. To clear up & confirm the Safety of the Way of Salvation thro' the Blood of Christ, is evidently the Scope and Design of that Epistle, as is manifest from the ten first *Chapters*. Particularly see *Chapter* 10. ℣. 19—22. And in order to shew the Safety of this Way, he insists upon the Excellency of his Person, and the Nature of his Office, his being called, appointed and authorized, and his actually going thro' the Work of our Redemption: which, together with some occasional Exhortations, Digressions, &c. is the Substance of his Discourse, from *Chap.* 1. ℣. 1. to *Chap.* 10. ℣. 23.

Thus, as GOD, he was of infinite Dignity and Worth: as GOD, he was at Liberty to undertake. He had an Estate (if I may so speak) of his own, and could pay the Debt of another with what was his own, and purchase for us an Inheritance. And I may add, that as he was the *Son of God*, the *second* Person in the Trinity, there was a Suitableness, that he, rather than either of the other Persons, should be appointed to this Work. The *Father* sustains the Character of supreme Lord and Governour, asserts the Rights of the God-head, maintains the Honour of his Law and Government. The *Son* becomes Mediator between God and Man, to open a Door for God to shew Mercy to Man consistently with his Honour, and for Man to return to God with Safety. The *Holy Spirit* is the Sanctifier, to work in Sinners to will and to do, and recover and bring them to repent and return to God thro' Jesus Christ. Thus the Gospel teaches us to believe. *Eph.* 2. 18.

He also was *made Flesh and dwelt among us*, and for our sakes was *made under the Law*; to the End, that in our Nature he might *fulfil all Righteousness*, and *bear the Curse*. As he was one with the *Father*, he was fit to be trusted with

with his *Father's* Honour. As he was *Immanuel*, God with us, he was fit to be betrusted with our Salvation. As he was *God-Man*, he was fit to be *Mediator* between God and Man. His *Humanity* rendered him capable to appear in *the Form of a Servant*, and to become *obedient unto Death*: and his *Divinity* rendred his Obedience and Sufferings sufficient to answer the Ends designed. This is He of whom the Text speaks, *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son.* He *gave* him, he appointed him to the Work, he put him into the Office, he anointed him, and then he *laid on him the Iniquities of us all*, and *set him forth to be a Propitiation.* Which brings me to consider,

(2.) *That he was sufficiently authorized to be a Mediator between God and Man*; to take the Place of Sinners, and to obey and die in the Room of a guilty World. — God the supreme Governour of the World had sufficient Power and Authority to appoint the *first Adam* to be a Representative for his Posterity, to act in their Room: and by the same Authority he has appointed his Son, the *second Adam*, to be a second publick Head. *Rom.* 5. 12—19. By divine Constitution, the *first Adam* was made a publick Person; and by divine Constitution, the *second Adam* is made such too. Both receive all their Authority to act in that Capacity from the Constitution of God.—The calling, appointing and authorizing of Christ, to take upon him this Office and Work of a Mediator and high Priest, is particularly treated of in the *fifth Chapter* to the *Hebrews*. He was *called of God, as was Aaron*, ver. 4. He took not this high Office upon himself, but was invested with it by his Father, ℣. 5. He was *called of God an high Priest after the Order of Melchisedek*, ℣. 10. His Father proposed the Office and the Work; and he willingly undertook. *Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God.* Heb. 10. 7. *God so loved the World, that he GAVE his only begotten Son*, Joh. 3. 16. And hence Christ says, *He did not come of himself, but was sent of his Father*, Joh. 7. 28, 29. And that *he did not come to do his own Will, but the Will of him that sent him*, Joh. 6. 38. And his Father acknowledges him as such by a Voice from Heaven. Mat. 17. 5. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

Without such a divine Constitution, the Death of Christ could have been of no Benefit to Mankind. As, if an innocent Man should offer to die in the Room of a condemned Criminal, and should actually lay down his Life; yet it could be of no Benefit to the poor Criminal, unless the civil Government had authorized him so to do. *i. e.* unless, by some act, they had declared, that his Life should be accepted, in the Eye of the Law, instead of the Criminal's. The Application is easy.— Thus Christ was called and put into his mediatoral Office and authorized to the Work, by God the supreme Governour of the World. And hence in Allusion to the *Jewish* Custom of *anointing* Men, when advanced to some high Office and important Trust; (so *Aaron* was *anointed* Priest, and *David* was *anointed* King:) In Allusion, I say, to this, he is called *CHRIST*, which is by Interpretation, the *ANOINTED*. Thus, as to his Personal Dignity, he was sufficient to undertake; and thus, was he authorized to do so. And

(3.) *What he has done is perfectly suited, in its own Nature, to answer all the Ends proposed.* That is, to secure the Honour of God, the Honour of his Holiness, Justice and Truth, his Law, Government and sacred Authority; and so open a Door for the free and honourable Exercise of his Mercy and Grace towards a sinful, guilty World, and a Way in which Sinners might return to God with divine Acceptance. God the supreme Governour of the World knew upon what Grounds there was Need of a Mediator, what Ends he had to answer, and how they might be answered in the best Manner. According to the Counsel of his own Will, in his infinite Wisdom, he laid the very Plan, which is now revealed to us in the Gospel. He appointed one to be a Mediator whom he judged fit, put him into the Office, and appointed him his Work. All this Work Jesus Christ has done. He has *finished the Work, which the Father gave him to do.* Joh. 17. 4. & 19. 30. And so has been *faithful to him that appointed him.* Heb. 3. 2. So that herefrom we might be assured, that what he has done, is most perfectly suited in it's own Nature to answer all the Ends proposed, altho' it were quite beyond us to understand *how*.—But, by the Help of the Word and Spirit of God, we may be able to

to enter a little Way into this wonderful and glorious Mystery.

It was fit, the *first Adam*, as the Representative and publick Head of Mankind, should, as a Condition of the everlasting Love and Favour of God, have continued in a most willing and perfect Subjection to God the Governour of the World, valuing his Honour and Glory above all Things. This was God's Due. This would have satisfied God's Holiness: for Holiness is satisfied, when the Thing which is right and fit is done. Holiness wants no more; but is then content and well-pleased. And upon this Condition, Mankind might have been considered, as Subjects fit for the divine Favour; and might have received the promised Reward, to the Honour of the divine Holiness and Goodness.—— Now Jesus Christ the Son of God has, by his Father's Appointment and Approbation, assumed our Nature, taken *Adam*'s Place, done that which was *Adam*'s Duty in our Room and Stead, as another publick Head, obeyed the Law God gave his Creature, a Law which he was not under, but in Consequence of his undertaking to stand in our Room and Stead. The Creature fails of paying that Honour to the Governour of the World, which is his Due from the Creature. A GOD lays aside his Glory, appears in the Form of a Servant, and becomes Obedient; and so, in the Creature's Stead and Behalf, pays that Honour to the Governour of the World, which was the Creature's Duty. And thus the Governour of the World is considered, respected, treated and honoured, as being what he is, by Man, i. e. by their Representative Christ Jesus, God-Man-Mediator. And now, hereby God's Right to the Obedience of his Creatures, and their Unworthiness of his Favour upon any other Condition, are publickly owned and acknowledged: the Debt is owned, and the Debt is paid by the Son of God; and so Holiness is satisfied: for Holiness is satisfied, when the Thing that is right and fit is done. And now this Door being opened, Mankind may thro' Christ be considered as Subjects to whom God may shew Favour consistent with his Honour. Yea, the divine Holiness may be honoured, by granting all Favours, as a Reward to Christ's Virtue and Obedience.

Again, it was fit, if any intelligent Creature ſhou'd at any Time ſwerve at all from the perfect Will of God, that he ſhould for ever loſe his Favour, and fall under his everlaſting Diſpleaſure, for a Thing ſo infinitely Wrong. And in ſuch a Caſe, it was fit the Governour of the World ſhould be infinitely diſpleaſed, and publickly teſtify his infinite Diſpleaſure, by a Puniſhment adequate thereto, inflicted on the ſinning Creature. This would ſatisfy Juſtice: for Juſtice is ſatisfied, when the Thing which is wrong, is puniſhed according to it's Deſert.—— Hence, it was fit, when, by a Conſtitution holy, juſt and good, *Adam* was made a public Head, to repreſent his Race, and act not only for himſelf, but for all his Poſterity; it was fit, I ſay, that he and all his Race, for his firſt Tranſgreſſion, ſhould loſe the Favour, and fall under the everlaſting Diſpleaſure, of the Almighty. It was fit, that God ſhould be infinitely diſpleaſed at ſo abominable a Thing; and that as Governour of the World he ſhould publickly bear Teſtimony againſt it, as an infinite Evil, by inflicting the infinite Puniſhment the Law threatned, i. e. by damning the whole World. This would have ſatisfied Juſtice: for Juſtice is ſatisfied when Juſtice takes Place, when the guilty are treated with that Severity they ought to be, when Sin is puniſhed, as being what it is.——— Now, Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God has, by his Father's Appointment and Approbation, aſſumed our Nature, taken the Place of a guilty World; and had not only *Adam*'s firſt Tranſgreſſion, but the Iniquities of us all laid upon him; and in our Room and Stead has ſuffered the Wrath of God, the Curſe of the Law, offering up himſelf a Sacrifice to God for the Sins of Men. And hereby the infinite Evil of Sin, and the Righteouſneſs of the Law, are publickly owned and acknowledged, and the deſerved Puniſhment voluntarily ſubmitted unto by Man, i. e. by their Repreſentative. And thus Juſtice is ſatisfied: For Juſtice is ſatisfied, when Juſtice takes Place. And Sin is now treated as being what it is, as much as if God had damned the whole World; and God, as Governour, appears as ſevere againſt it. And thus the Righteouſneſs of God is declared and manifeſted, by Chriſt's being ſet forth to be a Propitiation for Sin; and he may now be juſt, and yet juſtify him that believes in Jeſus. *By*

By all this, the Law is magnified and made honourable. On the one Hand; were any in all God's Dominions tempted to think, that the great Governour of the World had dealt too severely with Man, in suspending his everlasting Welfare upon the Condition of perfect Obedience? God practically answers, and says, "I did as well by Mankind, "as I should desire to have been done by, my self; had I "been in their Case, and they in mine. For when my Son, "who is as my self, came to stand in their Stead, I required "the same Condition of him."—— And what the Father says, the Son confirms. He practically owns the Law to be holy, just and good, and the Debt to be due, and pays it most willingly to the last Mite, without any Objection. Which was as if he had said, "There was all the Reason in "the World, that the everlasting Welfare of Mankind "should be suspended on that Condition; nor could I "have desired it to have been otherwise, had I my self "been in their Case."—— On the other Hand; were any tempted to think, that God had been too severe in threatning everlasting Damnation for Sin? Here this Point is also cleared up. God the Father practically says, that he did, as he would have been done by, had he been in their Case, and they in his. For when his Son, his second Self, comes to stand in their Place; he abates nothing, but appears as great an Enemy to Sin, in his Conduct, as if he had damned the whole World. His Son also owns the Sentence just. He takes the Cup and drinks it off. Considering the infinite Dignity of his Person, his Sufferings were equivalent, to the eternal Damnation of such Worms as we.

Thus the Law is magnified and made honourable; and at the same Time the Honour of God's Government & sacred Authority is secured. And I may add, so is also the Honour of his *Truth*: for he has been *true* to his Threatning, *In the Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*: For on that very Day the *second Adam* virtually laid down his Life in the Room and Stead of a guilty World. He is the *Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*.—So that now there is no Room left, for those that will view Things impartially, to have undue Thoughts of the Governour of

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the World; nor any Thing done to expose his Government to Reproach, or his Authority to Contempt. The Honour of the divine Government and Authority appears as sacred and tremendous, as if he had damned the whole World. And altho' Sinners will take Occasion to sin and be encouraged in their Ways, because Grace abounds; yet the Governour of the World has not given the Occasion. In his Conduct, the whole of it considered, he appears as severe against Sin, as if he had damned the whole World, without any Mixture of the least Mercy. The infinite Dignity of his Son causes that those Sufferings he bore in our Room, are as bright a Display of the divine Holiness and Justice, as if all the human Race had for their Sin been cast into the Lake of Fire & Brimstone; and the Smoke of their Torments ascended for ever and ever.

Moreover, By all this, a Way is opened for the free and honourable Exercise of Mercy and Grace towards a sinful, guilty World. It may be done consistently with the Honour of God, of his Holiness and Justice, his Law and Government, his Truth and sacred Authority: for the Honour of all these is effectually secured.—It may be done to the Honour of divine Grace: for now it appears, that God did not pity the World under a Notion that they had been by him severely and hardly dealt with, nor under a Notion it would have been too severe to have proceeded against them according to Law. The Law is not made void, but established. No Reflections are cast upon the divine Government. And Grace appears to be free, taking its Rise, not from any Thing in us, but merely from self-moving Goodness and sovereign Mercy. — This Way of Salvation is suited to set off the Grace of God to Advantage, and make it appear to be what it is.

Having thus finished the Work assigned him; he arose from the Dead, he ascended on high, he entred into the Holy of Holies, into Heaven it self, to appear in the Presence of God for us, as our great high Priest. *Heb.* 9. And here as God-Man Mediator he is exalted to the highest Honour, has a Name above every Name, sits on the right Hand of the Majesty on high, having all Power in Heaven and

and Earth committed unto him, and ever lives to make Intercession, and is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God thro' him,—Such is the Virtue of his Righteousness and Blood, and such is his Honour and Interest in the Court of Heaven, and such is his Faithfulness to all that believe in him; that now it is perfectly safe, to return to God thro' him, and venture our *everlasting ALL* upon his Worth and Merits, Mediation and Intercession. Heb. 4. 16. *Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace.*

Thus we see what Necessity there was of Satisfaction for Sin, and that the Demands of the Law should be answered: And thus we see what has been done for these Purposes, and it's Sufficiency to answer all the Ends proposed. The Mediator was of sufficient Dignity as to his Person, he had sufficient Authority as to his Office, and he has faithfully done his Work. And now the Honour of God's Holiness and Justice, Law and Government and sacred Authority, is secured; and a Way is opened in which he may honourably put his Designs of Mercy into Execution, and Sinners safely return unto him.—— And now, before I proceed to consider more particularly what a Way is opened, and what Methods God has entered upon for the Recovery of sinful, guilty Creatures to himself, I shall make a few *Remarks* upon what has been said.

Remark 1. *As the Law is a Transcript of the divine Nature, so also is the Gospel.* The Law is holy, just and good, and is as it were the Image of the Holiness, Justice and Goodness of God; and so also is the Gospel. The Law insists upon God's Honour from the Creature, and ordains that his everlasting Welfare shall be suspended upon that Condition; and the Gospel says Amen to it. The Law insists upon it, that it is an infinite Evil for the Creature to swerve in the least from the most perfect Will of God, and that it deserves an infinite Punishment; and the Gospel says Amen to it. The Law discovered also the infinite Goodness of God, in it's being suited to make the obedient Creature perfectly happy; but the Gospel still more abundantly displays the infinite Goodness and wonderful free Grace of God. The Law was holy, just and good, and the Image of God's Holiness, Justice and Goodness; but

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the Gospel is more eminently so: In it the Holiness, Justice and Goodness of God are painted more to the Life, in a Manner truly surprizing, and beyond our Comprehension; yea, to the Amazement of Angels, who desire to look and pry into this wonderful Contrivance. 1 *Pet.* 1. 12.

Here in this Glass the Glory of the Lord is to be beheld. 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. The Glory of God is to be seen in *the Face of Christ.* 2 Cor. 4. 6. What has been by him done in this Affair discovers the glorious moral Beauty of the divine Nature. Much of God is to be seen in the moral Law, it is his Image; but more of God is to be seen in the Gospel, for herein his Image is exhibited more to the Life, more clearly and conspicuously.

The moral Excellency of the moral Law sufficiently evidences, that it is from God; it is so much like God, that it is evident that it is from God: So the moral Excellency of the Gospel sufficiently evidences that it is from God; it is so much like him, that it is evident that it is from him: It is his very Image: therefore it is his Offspring: it is a Copy of his moral Perfections, and they are the Original. It is so much like God, that it is perfectly to his Mind, he is pleased with it, he delights to save Sinners in this Way. And if ever this Gospel becomes the Power of God to our Salvation, it will make us like unto God, it will transform us into his Image, and we shall be pleased with this Way of Salvation, and delight to be saved in such a Way; a Way wherein God is honoured, the Sinner humbled, the Law established, Sin discountenanced, Boasting excluded, and Grace glorified.

If any Man has a Taste for moral Excellency, a Heart to account God glorious for being what he is; he cannot but see the moral Excellency of the Law, and love it, and conform to it; because it is the Image of God: and so he cannot but see the moral Excellency of the Gospel, and believe it, and love it, and comply with it; for it is also the Image of God. He that can see the moral Beauty of the Original, cannot but see the moral Beauty of the Image drawn to the Life. He therefore that despises the Gospel, and is an Enemy to the Law; even he is at Enmity against God himself. *Rom.* 8. 7. Ignorance of the Glory of God & Enmity against

against him, makes Men ignorant of the Glory of the Law and of the Gospel, and Enemies to both. Did Men know and *love him that begat, they would love that which is begotten of him.* 1 Joh. 5. 1. *He that is of God, heareth God's Words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.* Joh. 8. 47.

And therefore a genuine Compliance with the Gospel supposes, that *he, who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, shines in the Heart, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ.* 2 Cor. 4. 6. And a Sight and Sense of the moral Excellency of the Gospel-Way of Salvation assures the Heart of it's Divinity; and hereby a supernatural and divine Assent to the Truth of the Gospel is begotten in the Heart. And a Sense of the infinite Dignity of the Mediator, and that he was sent of God, and that he has finished the Work which was given him to do, and so opened and consecrated a new and living Way of access to God; together with a Sense of the full and free Invitation, to Sinners to return to God in this Way, given in the Gospel, and the free Grace of God therein discovered, and his Readiness to be reconciled; a spiritual Sight and Sense of these Things, I say, emboldens the Heart of a humbled Sinner to trust in Christ, and to return to God thro' him. Hence the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, having gone thro' this Subject in a doctrinal Way, in the Conclusion makes this practical Inference. *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and living Way which he hath consecrated for us, thro' the Vail, that is to say, his Flesh; and having a high Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true Heart and full Assurance of Faith.* Heb. 10. 19—22.

Rem. 2. From what has been said, we may observe, that the Necessity of Satisfaction for Sin and of the preceptive Part of the Law being answered, takes it's Rise from the moral Perfections of the divine Nature, and the moral Fitness of Things; and therefore a true Idea of God and a just Sense of the moral Fitness of Things will naturally lead us to see the Necessity of Satisfaction for Sin, &c. and predispose us to understand and believe what is held forth by divine Revelation to that Purpose. On the other Hand,

where

where a true Idea, of the moral Perfections of God and the moral Fitneſs of Things, is not; but on the contrary, very wrong Notions of the divine Being and of the true Nature of Things; there will naturally be an Indiſpoſition and an Averſion to ſuch Principles, nor will what the Goſpel teaches about them be readily underſtood or believed. And doubtleſs it was this which originally led ſome to deny the Neceſſity of Satisfaction for Sin, and others to go a Step farther, to deny that Chriſt ever deſigned to make any. Joh. 8. 47. *He that is of God, heareth God's Words; ye therefore hear them not, becauſe ye are not of God.*

Rem. 3. The Death of Chriſt was not deſigned at all to take away the evil Nature of Sin, or it's ill Deſert; for Sin is unalterably what it is, and cannot be made a leſs Evil: But the Death of Chriſt was rather on the contrary, to acknowledge and manifeſt the evil Nature and ill Deſert of Sin, to the End that pardoning Mercy might not make it ſeem to be a leſs Evil than it really is. So that altho' God may freely pardon all our Sins and entitle us to eternal Life for Chriſt's Sake; yet, he does look upon us, conſidered merely as in our ſelves, to be as much to blame as ever, and to deſerve Hell as much as ever; and therefore we are always to look upon our ſelves ſo too. And hence we ought always to live under a Senſe of the Freeneſs and Riches of God's Grace in pardoning our Sins; & under a Senſe of our own Vileneſs and ill Deſert, in our ſelves, upon the Account of them, altho' pardon'd. *That thou mayſt remember and be confounded, and never open thy Mouth any more becauſe of thy Shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord God.* Ezek. 16. 63. But this is not the Way of Hypocrites: For being once confident that their Sins are pardoned, their Shame, Sorrow and Abaſement are ſoon at an End. And having no Fear of Hell, they have but little Senſe of Sin. And from the Doctrine of free Grace, they are emboldened, as it were, to ſin upon free Coſt. But thus ſaith the Lord, *When I ſhall ſay to the Righteous, that he ſhall ſurely live: If he truſt to his own Righteouſneſs and commit Iniquity; all his Righteouſneſs ſhall not be remembered, but for his Iniquity that he hath committed, he ſhall die for it.* Ezek. 33. 13.

Rem.

REM. 4. Nor was the Death of Christ designed to draw forth the Pity of God towards a guilty World. For God could find it in his Heart, of his mere Goodness, without any Motive from without, to give his only begotten Son to die for Sinners. But this was greater Goodness, than it would have been to have saved Mankind by an Act of sovereign Grace without any Mediator: it was a more expensive Way. As, for an earthly Sovereign to give his only Son to die for a Traitor, that the Traitor might live, would be a greater Act of Goodness, than to pardon the Traitor, of mere Sovereignty.—— It was not therefore because the Goodness of the divine Nature needed any Motive to draw it forth into Exercise, that Jesus Christ obeyed and died in our Room: But it was to answer the Ends of moral Government, and to secure the Honour of the moral Governour; and so open a Way for the honourable Exercise of the divine Goodness, which, in its own Nature, is infinite, free and self-moving, and wants no Motive from without to draw it forth into Act. And the same, no doubt, may be said of Christ's *Intercession in Heaven.*—— We are therefore, in our approaches to God, not to look to Christ to persuade the Father to pity and pardon us, as tho' he was not willing to shew Mercy of his own Accord: but we are to look to Christ and go to God thro' him for all we want, under a Sense that we are in our selves too bad to be pitied without some sufficient Salvo to the divine Honour, or to have any Mercy shewn us. And therefore when we look to be justified by *free Grace*, it must be only thro' the *Redemption* that is in Jesus Christ; who has been *set forth to be a Propitiation for Sin, to declare God's Righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* Rom. 3.24,25,26.

REM. 5. Some of the peculiar Principles of the *Antinomians*, seem to take their Rise from wrong Notions of the Nature of Satisfaction for Sin. They seem to have no right Notions of the moral Perfections of God, and of the natural Obligations we are under to him, nor any right Apprehensions of the Nature and Ends of moral Government, nor any Ideas of the Grounds, Nature and Ends of Satisfaction for Sin. (A right Sense of which Things tends powerfully

powerfully to promote a holy Fear and reverential Awe of the dread Majesty of Heaven and Earth, a Sense of the infinite Evil of Sin, brokenness of Heart, tenderness of Conscience, a humble, holy, watchful, prayerful Temper and Life, as well as to prepare the Way for Faith in the Blood of Christ.) But they seem to have no right Apprehensions of these Things. They seem to consider God *merely* under the Notion of a *Creditor*, and us *merely* under the Notion of *Debtors*; and to suppose, when Christ upon the Cross said, *It is finished*, he then paid the whole Debt of the Elect, and saw the Book crost, whereby all their Sins were *actually* blotted out and forgiven: and now all that remains, is for the holy Spirit immediately to reveal it to one and another, that he is elected, and so for him Christ died, and so his Sins are all pardoned; which Revelation he is firmly to believe, and never again to doubt of: and this they call *Faith*. From which it seems they understand nothing rightly about God or Christ, the Law or Gospel. For nothing is more evident than that God is in Scripture considered as *righteous Governour* of the World, and we as *Criminals* guilty before him; and the evident Design of Christ's Death was, to be a *Propitiation for Sin*, to declare and manifest God's Righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. *Rom.* 3. 9—26. And the Gospel knows nothing about a Sinner's being justified in any other Way than *by Faith*, and by Consequence in order of Nature not till *after Faith*. The Gospel knows nothing about Satisfaction for Sin in their Sense; but every where teaches that the *Elect*, as well as others, are equally *under Condemnation* and the *Wrath of God*, yea, are *Children of Wrath* while Unbelievers. *Joh.* 3. 18, 36. *Eph.* 2. 3. *Act.* 3. 19.

Again, While they consider God *merely* under the Character of a *Creditor*, and us *merely* as *Debtors*, and Christ as paying the *whole Debt* of the Elect; now because Christ obeyed the Law, as well as suffered it's Penalty, therefore they seem to think, that Christ has done all *their Duty*, so as that now they have *none* to do, nothing to do but firmly to *believe* that Christ has done *all*. They have nothing to do with the *Law*, no, not so much as to be their Rule to live

live by; but are set at full Liberty from all Obligations to *any Duty* whatsoever.—Not understanding, that *Christ gave himself, to redeem his People from all Iniquity, and purify them to himself, a peculiar People, zealous of good Works*, Tit. 2. 14. And not understanding, that our natural Obligations to perfect Obedience are not capable of being dissolved. *Mat.* 5. 17. And not understanding, that our Obligations to all holy living, are mightily increased by the Grace of the Gospel. *Rom.* 12. 1. Indeed they seem to understand nothing rightly, but to view every thing in a wrong Light. And instead of considering Christ as a Friend to Holiness, as one *that loves Righteousness and hates Iniquity*, Heb. 1. 9. they make him *a Minister of Sin*, Gal. 2. 17. and turn the Grace of God into Wantonness. All their Notions tend to render their Consciences insensible of the Evil of Sin, to cherish spiritual Pride and carnal Security, and to open a Door to all Ungodliness.

Section V.

Shewing, a Door of Mercy *is opened by Jesus Christ for a guilty* World.

I come now to another Thing proposed, *viz.*

III. To shew more particularly *what a Way to Life has been opened, by what Christ our Mediator has done & suffered.*

In general; from what has been said, we may see that the mighty Bar which lay in the Way of Mercy, is removed by Jesus Christ: and now a Door is opened, and a Way provided, wherein the great Governour of the World may, consistent with the Honour of his Holiness and Justice, his Law and Government and sacred Authority, and to the Glory of his Grace, put in Execution all his Designs of Mercy towards a sinful, guilty, undone World. But to be more particular,

(1.) *A Way is opened, wherein the great Governour of the World may, consistent with his Honour and to the Glory of his Grace, pardon and receive to Favour and intitle to eternal Life, all and every one of the human Race, who shall cordially fall in with the Gospel-Design, believe in Christ, and return home to God thro' him.*

What Christ has done is in Fact *sufficient*, to open a Door for God thro' him to become *reconcilable* to the whole World. The *Sufferings* of Christ, all Things considered, have as much displayed God's hatred of Sin, and as much secured the Honour of his Law, as if the whole World had been damned; as none will deny, who believe the infinite Dignity of his divine Nature. God may now therefore thro' Jesus Christ stand ready to pardon the whole World. There is nothing in the Way.—And the *Obedience* of Christ has brought as much Honour to God and to his Law, as the perfect Obedience of *Adam* and of all his Race would have done. The Rights of the God-head are as much asserted and maintained. So that there is nothing in the Way, but that Mankind may, thro' Christ, be received into full Favour, and intitled to eternal Life. God may stand ready to do it, consistent with his Honour. What Christ has done is every Way sufficient. Mat. 22. 4. *All Things are now ready.*

And God has expresly declared, that it was the *Design* of Christ's Death, to open this Door of Mercy to *all*. Joh. 3. 16. *God so loved the WORLD, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* That *whosoever* of *all Mankind*, whether *Jew* or *Greek*, Bond or Free, Rich or Poor, without any Exception, tho' the Chief of Sinners, *that believes, should be saved.* For this *End*, God gave his only begotten Son. *He set him forth to be a Propitiation for Sin, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him* (without any Exception, let *him* be who he will,) *that believeth in Jesus.* Rom. 3. 25, 26.

Hence, the Apostles received an universal Commission. Matt. 28.19. *Go, teach ALL NATIONS.* Mar. 16. 15, 16. *Go ye into ALL the World, and preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE.* Accordingly, the Apostles proclaimed the News of Pardon and Peace to *every one*, offered Mercy to *all* without Exception, and invited *all* without Distinction. *He that believeth shall be saved: Repent and be Converted, that your Sins may be blotted out*: Were Declarations they made to all in general. To the *Jewish* Nation they were sent to say, in the Name of the King of Heaven, *I have prepared*

prepared my Dinner: My Oxen and my Fatlings are killed, and all Things are ready: Come unto the Marriage. Matt. 22. 4. And as to the *Gentile* Nations, their Orders ran thus, *Go ye therefore into the High-Ways, and as many as ye find, bid to the Marriage. ℣.* 9. To the *Jewish* Nation, God had been used to send his Servants the Prophets, in the Days of Old, saying, *Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?* Ezek. 33. 11. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come.* Isai. 55. 1. *Incline your Ear, and come unto me: Hear, and your Soul shall live. ℣.* 3. And now Orders are given, that the whole World be invited to a Reconciliation to God thro' Christ. *Whosoever will let him come, and he that cometh shall in no wise be cast out.* Thus, Christ has opened a Door; and thus, the Great Governour of the World may, consistent with his Honour, be reconciled to any that believe and repent: And thus he actually stands ready.

And now *all Things* being thus *ready* on God's Side, and the Offers, Invitations and Calls of the Gospel being to every one without Exception; Hence, it is attributed to Sinners themselves, that they perish at last, even, to their own voluntary Conduct. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life.* Joh. 5. 40. And they are considered as being perfectly inexcusable. Joh. 15. 22. *Now they have no Cloke for their Sin.* And all because a Way is opened, in which they might be delivered from Condemnation, but they will not comply therewith. Joh. 3. 19. *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men loved Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds were Evil.* And therefore, in Scripture-Account, they stand exposed to a more aggravated Punishment in the World to come. Matt. 11. 20—24. *Wo unto thee,* Chorazin, *Wo unto thee,* Bethsaida — &c. *And thou* Capernaum, *which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell:* &c. *It shall be more tolerable for* Tyre *and* Sidon *and* Sodom *in the Day of Judgment,* than for these Cities: *Because they repented not.*

And now because the Door of Mercy is thus opened to the *whole World* by the Blood of Christ, therefore in Scripture he is called, *the Saviour of the WORLD,* 1 Joh. 4. 14. *The Lamb of God, which takes away the Sin of the WORLD,* Joh. 1. 29. *A Propitiation for the Sins of the WHOLE*

WORLD. 1 Joh. 2. 2. *That gave himself a Ranſom for ALL.* 1 Tim. 2. 6. And *taſted Death for EVERY MAN.* Heb. 2. 9. The plain Senſe of all which Expreſſions may, I think, without any Danger of Miſtake, be learnt from Joh. 3. 16. *God ſo loved the WORLD, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in him, ſhould not Periſh, but have everlaſting Life.* * And indeed, was not the Door of Mercy opened to *all* indefinitely, how could God *ſincerely* offer Mercy to *all?* Or *heartily* invite *all?* Or *juſtly* blame thoſe who do not accept? Or *righteouſly* puniſh them for *neglecting ſo great Salvation?*

Beſides, if Chriſt died merely for the *Elect*, that is, to the Intent, that they only upon believing, might, conſiſtent with the divine Honour, be received to Favour; then God could not, conſiſtent with his Juſtice, ſave any beſides, if they ſhould believe. *For without ſhedding of Blood, there can be no Remiſſion*, Heb. 9. 22. If Chriſt did not deſign by his Death to open a Door for all to be ſaved conditionally, i. e. upon the Condition of Faith, then there is no ſuch Door opened. The Door is not opened wider than Chriſt deſigned it ſhould be. There is nothing more purchaſed by his Death, than he intended. If this Benefit was not intended, then it is not procured. If it be not procured, then the Non-Elect cannot any of them be ſaved, conſiſtent with divine Juſtice. And by Conſequence, if this be the Caſe, then——(1.) *The Non-Elect have no Right at all, to take any the leaſt Encouragement, from the Death of Chriſt or the Invitations of the Goſpel, to return to God thro' Chriſt in Hopes of Acceptance.* For there are no Grounds of

* "I am ready to profeſs," ſays the famous Doctor TWISSE, "and that, "I ſuppoſe, as out of the Mouths of all our Divines, that every one who "hears the Goſpel, (without Diſtinction between Elect or Reprobate) "is bound to believe that Chriſt died for him, ſo far as to procure both "the Pardon of his Sins and the Salvation of his Soul, in Caſe he "believes and repents." Again, "As *Peter* could not have been ſaved, "unleſs he had believed and repented; ſo *Judas* might have been "ſaved, if he had done ſo." Again, "*Joh.* 3. 16. gives a fair Light "of Expoſition to thoſe Places where Chriſt is ſaid to have *died for the* "*Sins of the World*, yea, *of the whole World*, to wit, in this Manner that "*whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not Periſh, but have everlaſting* "*Life.*"— Dr. TWISSE on *the Riches of God's Love to the Veſſels of Mercy*, &c.

of Encouragement given. Christ did not die for them in any Sense. It is impossible, their Sins should be pardoned, consistent with Justice: as much impossible as if there had never been a Saviour, as if Christ had never died. And so there is no Encouragement at all for them. And therefore it would be Presumption in them to take any. All which is apparently contrary to the whole Tenor of the Gospel, which every where invites all, and gives equal Encouragement to all. *Come, for all Things are ready*, said Christ to the reprobate *Jews*, *Mat.* 22. 4. — And if the Non-Elect have no Right to take any Encouragement from the Death of Christ and the Invitations of the Gospel, to return to God thro' him in Hopes of Acceptance, then— (2.) *No Man at all, can rationally take any Encouragement, until he knows that he is elected.* Because, until then, he can't know, that there is any Ground of Encouragement. It is not rational to take Encouragement, before we see sufficient Grounds for it: yea, it is Presumption to do so. But no Man can see sufficient Grounds of Encouragement to trust in Christ, and to return to God thro' him, in Hopes of Acceptance; unless he sees that God may, thro' Christ, consistent with his Honour, accept and save him, and is willing so to do. If God can, and is actually willing to save any that comes; then there is no Objection. I may come, and any may come, *all Things are ready, there is Bread enough and to spare.* But if God is reconcilable only to the Elect; then I may not come, I dare not come, it would be Presumption to come, 'till I know that I am elected. And how can I know that? Why, not by any Thing in all the Bible. While an Unbeliever, 'tis impossible I should know it by any Thing in Scripture: It is no where said in express Words, that I, by Name, am elected, and there are no Rules of Trial laid down in such a Case, And how can I therefore in this Case, ever know that I am elected, but by an immediate Revelation from Heaven? And how shall I know, that this Revelation is true? How shall I dare to venture my Soul upon it? The Gospel does not teach me to look for any such Revelation, nor give any Marks whereby I may know when it is from God, and when from the Devil. Thus, an invincible Bar is laid in my Way to Life.

I must know that I am one of the Elect, before I can see any Encouragement to believe in Christ: because none but the Elect have any more Business to do so, than the Devils. But, if I am one of the Elect, yet it is impossible I should know it, 'till afterwards.—— Besides, all this is contrary to the whole Tenor of the Gospel; *Whosoever will, let him come*; *Whosoever comes, shall in no wise be cast out*; *Whosoever believes, shall be saved.*— And contrary to the Experience of all true Believers, who in their first Return to God thro' Christ, always take all their Encouragement from the Gospel, and lay the Weight of their Souls upon the Truth of that, and venture their eternal All upon this Bottom; and not upon the Truth of any new Revelation. They venture their All upon the Truths already revealed in the Gospel, and not upon the Truth of any Proposition not revealed there.

So that let us view this Point in what Light we will, nothing is more clear and certain, than that Christ died, *that WHOSOEVER believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* And God may now *be just*, and yet *justify* any of the Race of *Adam*, that believe in Jesus. And he stands ready so to do.——— And these Things being true, the Servants, upon good Grounds, might, in their Master's Name, tell the obstinate Jews, who did not belong to the Election of Grace, and who finally refused to hearken to the Calls of the Gospel, *Behold, I have prepared my Dinner: my Oxen and my Fatlings are killed, and all Things are ready: Come unto the Marriage.* Mat. 22. 4. And if they had come, they would have been heartily welcome: The Provision made was sufficient, and the Invitation sincere: Jesus wept over them, saying, *O that thou hadst known, in this thy Day, the Things which belong to thy Peace!* So that there was nothing to hinder, had they but been willing. But it seems they were otherwise disposed; and therefore *they made light of it, and went their Ways, one to his Farm, another to his Merchandise; and the Remnant took his Servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them,* (*v.* 5, 6.) And in this Glass we may see the very Nature of all Mankind, and how all would actually do, if not prevented by divine Grace.—Justly, therefore, at the Day of Judgment, will

will *this be the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, but Men loved Darkness rather than Light.* For certainly, if Mankind are so perversely bad, that, notwithstanding their natural Obligations to God, and the Unreasonableness of their original Apostacy, they will yet persist in their Rebellion; and after all the glorious Provision, and kind Invitations of the Gospel, will not return to God thro' Christ: I say, certainly, God is not obliged to come out after them, and by his all-conquering Grace irresistibly reclaim them: but may justly let every Man take his own Course, and run his own Ruin. And an aggravated Damnation will every such Person deserve in the coming World, *for neglecting so great Salvation*, Heb. 2. 2, 3.

And now, if Christ's Atonement and Merits be thus sufficient for all, and if God stands ready to be reconciled to all, and if all are invited to return and come: Hence then we may learn, that it is safe for any of the poor, sinful, guilty, lost, undone Race of *Adam* to return to God in this Way. They shall surely find Acceptance with God. They may come *without Money, and without Price: and he that cometh shall in no wise be cast out.*

And hence we may see, upon what Grounds it is, that the poor, convinced, humbled Sinner is encouraged and emboldened to venture his *All* upon Christ, and return to God thro' him. 'Tis because any poor, sinful, guilty, Hell-deserving Wretch may come; any in the World; the worst in the World; the vilest, and most odious and despicable: For such he actually takes himself to be. And if he did not see that there was an open Door for such, for any such, for all such, he would doubt, and that with good Reason too, whether he might safely come. But when he understands and believes the Gospel-Revelation, and so is assured that it is safe for any, for all, the vilest and the worst; now the peculiar Vileness and Unworthiness which he sees in himself, ceases to be an Objection. He sees it safe for any, and therefore for him. And hence takes Courage, and is emboldened to venture his *All*, upon the free Grace of God, thro' Jesus Christ; and so returns in hopes of Acceptance.—— Now, does this poor Sinner venture upon a safe Foundation? Or does he not?——

He takes it for granted, that the ſupreme Governour of the World can, conſiſtently with his Honour, ſhew Mercy to any that come to him thro' Chriſt; and he takes it for granted, that he ſtands ready to do ſo, even to the vileſt and worſt; that the Door of Mercy ſtands wide open; and *whoſoever will, may come:* And upon theſe Principles, he takes Encouragement to return to God in hopes of Acceptance: and from a Senſe of his own Wants, and of the Glory and All-ſufficiency of the divine Nature, of the Bleſſedneſs there is in being the Lord's, devoted to him and living upon him, he does return with all his Heart; and to God he gives himſelf, to be for ever his: and if the Goſpel be true, ſurely he muſt be ſafe. The *Truth of the Goſpel* is the Foundation of all; for upon that, and that only he builds: not upon Works of Righteouſneſs which he has done, not upon any immediate Revelation of Pardon or the Love of Chriſt to him in particular; but merely upon Goſpel-Principles. If they therefore prove true, in the coming World; then will he receive the End of his Faith, the Salvation of his Soul.—— But to return,

Thus we ſee that by the Death of Chriſt, there is a wide Door opened for divine Mercy to exerciſe and diſplay it ſelf: the ſupreme Governour of the World may, conſiſtently with his Honour, now ſeat himſelf upon a Throne of Grace, and proclaim the News of Pardon and Peace thro' a guilty World; and it is perfectly ſafe for any of the guilty Race of *Adam*, to return unto him thro' Jeſus Chriſt.—— And now, were Mankind in a Diſpoſition to be heartily ſorry for their Apoſtacy from God, and diſpoſed to eſteem it their indiſpenſable Duty and higheſt Bleſſedneſs to return; were this the Caſe, the joyful News of a Saviour and of Pardon and Peace thro' him, would fly thro' the World like Lightning, and every Heart would be melted with Love and Sorrow and Gratitude; and all the Nations of the Earth would come, and fall down in the Duſt before the Lord, and bleſs his holy Name, and devote themſelves to him for ever, lamenting in the Bitterneſs of their Hearts that ever they did break away from their Subjection to ſuch a God. And were Mankind ſenſible of their ſinful, guilty, undone Eſtate by LAW, and diſpoſed to juſtify the Law

and

and condemn themselves; and were they sensible of the Holiness and Justice of the great Governour of the World; they would soon see their Need of such a Mediator as Christ Jesus, and soon see the wonderful Grace of the Gospel, and soon see the Glory of this Way of Salvation, and so know it to be from God, believe it, and fall in with it, and all the World would repent and convert of their own Accord, and so all the World might be saved without any more to do.—— But instead of this, such is the Temper of Mankind, that there is not one in the World, that, of his own Accord, is disposed to have any such Regard to God, or Sorrow for his Apostacy, or Inclination to repent and return; nor do Men once imagine, that they are in an Estate so wretched and undone, and stand in such a perishing Need of Christ and free Grace; and therefore they are ready to make light of the glad Tidings of the Gospel, and go their Ways, one to his Farm, another to his Merchandise: nor is there one of all the human Race disposed, of his own Accord, to lay down the Weapons of his Rebellion, and return to God by Jesus Christ. So that all will come to nothing, and not one be ever brought home to God, unless something farther be done; unless some Methods, and Methods very effectual, be used.

But that God should come out after such an apostate Race, who without any Grounds have turned Enemies to him, and without any Reason refuse to be reconciled, and that after all the glorious Provision and kind Invitations of the Gospel; that God, I say, should come out after such, and reclaim them by his own sovereign and All-conquering Grace; might seem to be a going counter to the Holiness and Justice of his Nature, and to tend to expose his Law and Government & sacred Authority to Contempt; in as much as they so eminently deserve to be consumed by the Fire of his Wrath. Therefore ——

(2.) *Jesus Christ did, by his Obedience and Death, open such a Door of Mercy, as that the supreme Governour of the World might, consistently with his Honour, take what Methods he pleased, in order to recover rebellious, guilty, stubborn Sinners to himself.*

That

That he might take *what Methods he pleased*, I say; for he knew from the Days of Eternity, how Mankind would be disposed to treat him, his Son, and his Grace; and he knew from Eternity, what Methods he *intended* to take to reclaim them: and these are the Methods which he now *pleases* to take; and the Methods, yea, the *only* Methods, which he *actually does take*. So that it is the same Thing in Effect to say, that by what Christ has done and suffered, a Door is opened, for the MOST HIGH, consistently with his Honour, to take — 1. What Methods he *actually does take*. Or — 2. What Methods he *pleases*. Or —3. What Methods he *from Eternity intended*. For all amount to just one and the same Thing. For what pleased him from Eternity, the same pleases him now; and what pleases him now, that he actually does. The infinite Perfection of his Nature does not admit of any new Apprehension, or Alteration of Judgment. By his infinite Understanding, he always had, and has, and will have, a compleat View of all Things past, present, and to come, at once. And by his infinite Wisdom and the perfect Rectitude of his Nature, he unchangeably sees and determines upon that Conduct which is right and fit and best. For with him *there is no Variableness, nor Shadow of Turning*. Jam. 1. 17.

Now, that what Christ has done and suffered, was *sufficient* to open a Way for the honourable Exercise of his sovereign Grace, in recovering Sinners to himself, is evident from what has been heretofore observed. And that it was *designed* for this End, and has in Fact effectually answered it, is plain from God's Conduct in the Affair. For otherwise he could not, consistent with his Honour or the Honour of his Law, use those Means to reclaim Sinners which he actually does. For all those Methods of Grace would else be contrary to LAW, which does not allow the Sinner to have any Favour shewn him without a sufficient Security to the divine Honour, as has been before proved. The Law therefore has been satisfied in this Respect, or these Favours could not be shewn. For Heaven and Earth shall sooner pass away, than the Law be disregarded in any one Point. It follows therefore, that not only special and saving Grace, but also that all the common

mon Favours which Mankind in general enjoy, and that all the Means of Grace which are common to the Elect and Non-Elect, are the Effects of Christ's Merits: All were purchased by him; none of these Things could have been granted to Mankind, but for him. Christ has opened the Door, and an infinite sovereign Goodness has strewed these common Mercies round the World. All those Particulars wherein Mankind are treated better than the damned in Hell, are over and above what mere LAW would allow of, and therefore are the Effects of Christ's Merits and Gospel-Grace. And for this, among other Reasons, Christ is called *the Saviour of the World.* And hence also God is said to be *reconciling the World to himself, not imputing their Trespasses unto them*, 2 Cor. 5. 19. Because for the present their Punishment is suspended, and they are treated in a Way of Mercy, are invited to Repentance, and have the Offers of Pardon and Peace and eternal Life made unto them. Hence, I say, God is said *not to impute their Sins unto them:* Agreeable with that parallel Place in *Psal.* 78. 38. where God is said *to forgive the Iniquity* of his People, because he *destroyed them not.*

Upon the whole then, this seems to be the true State of the Case. God is thro' Christ ready to be reconciled to all and every one, that will repent and return unto him thro' Jesus Christ. He sends the News of Pardon and Peace around a guilty World and invites every one to come, saying, *He that believeth, shall be saved*; *and he that believeth not, shall be damned.* And on this Account it is said, that *He will have all Men to be saved*, and *is not willing that any should perish:* because he offers Salvation to all, and uses Arguments to dissuade them from Perdition.— But in as much as Mankind will not hearken, but are obstinately set in their Way; therefore he takes State upon himself, and says, *I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy.* And a sinful, guilty World are in his Hands, and he may use what Methods of Grace with all that he pleases: Some, he may suffer to take their own Way, and run their own Ruin, if he pleases; and others, he may subdue and recover to himself, by his own all-conquering Grace.

And unto a certain Number, from Eternity, he intended

to

to shew this special Mercy. And these are said *to be given to Christ*, Joh. 6. 37. And with a special Eye to these *Sheep* did he *lay down his Life*, Joh. 10. 15. His Father intending, and he intending, that they, in Spight of all Opposition, should be brought to eternal Life at last. And hence *the Elect do* always *obtain*. Rom. 11. 7. compared with *Joh.* 6. 37.—And here we may learn how to understand those Places of Scripture, which seem to limit Christ's Undertaking to a certain Number. Mat. 1. 21. *Thou shalt call his Name Jesus; because he shall save HIS PEOPLE from their Sins.* Eph. 5. 23. *He is the Head of the CHURCH; and he is the Saviour of the BODY.* Ver. 25. *Christ loved the CHURCH, and gave himself FOR IT.* Act. 20. 28. *He hath purchased HIS CHURCH with his own Blood.* Joh. 10. 15. *I lay down my Life for the SHEEP.*— There were a certain Number, which the Father and the Son from all Eternity designed for *Vessels of Mercy*, to bring to Glory, *Rom.* 9. 23. With a View to these it was promised in the *Covenant of Redemption*, that Christ should *see of the Travel of his Soul*, Isai. 53. 11. And Christ says in Joh. 6. 37, 38, 39. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from Heaven, not to do my own Will; but the Will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's Will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last Day.* See also *Tit.* 2. 14. *Rev.* 5. 9, 10. *Eph*, 1. 4, 5, 6.

Thus Christ's Merits are sufficient for all the World, and the Door of Mercy is opened wide enough for all the World, and God the supreme Governour has proclaimed himself reconcilable to all the World, if they will believe and repent. And if they will not believe and repent, he is at Liberty to have Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and to shew Compassion to whom he will shew Compassion; according to the good Pleasure of his Will, to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace. He sits SOVEREIGN, and a rebellious, guilty World are in his Hands, and at his Dispose, and the Thing that seems good in his Sight, that he will do. And it is infinitely fit, right, and best he should; that the Pride of all Flesh may be brought low, & the Lord alone be exalted for ever.

And

And as this View of Things seems exactly to harmonize with the whole Tenor of the Gospel in *general*, and to agree with the various *particular* Representations of our Redemption by Christ; and to reconcile those Texts which seem to speak of a *universal Redemption*, with those which seem to speak of a *particular Redemption*; so it will naturally suggest an easy *Answer* to any *Objections* which may be made against it.

Obj. 1. *If Christ has suffered the Penalty of the Law, not only for the Elect, but also for the Non-Elect; how can it be just, that they themselves should be made to suffer it over again for ever in Hell?*

Ans. Because Christ did not die with a Design to release them from their deserved Punishment, but only upon Condition of Faith. And so they have no Right to the Release, but upon that Condition. 'Tis as just therefore they should be punished, as if Christ had never died; since they continue obstinate to the last. And 'tis just too they should have an aggravated Damnation, for refusing to return to God, despising the Offers of Mercy, and neglecting so great Salvation. *John.* 16—19.

Obj. 2. *If Christ obeyed the preceptive Part of the Law, not only for the Elect, but also for the Non-Elect; why are not all brought to eternal Life, since eternal Life is by Law promised to perfect Obedience?*

Ans. Because Christ did not purchase eternal Life for them, but upon the Condition of Faith: But they would not come to Christ, that they might have Life: and therefore they justly perish. *Joh.* 3. 16—19.

Obj. 3. *But for what Purpose did Christ die for those, who were in Hell a long Time before his Death?*

Ans. And to what Purpose did he die for those, who were in Heaven a long Time before his Death? The Truth is, that when Christ laid down his Life, a Ransom for all, he only accomplished what he undertook at the Beginning. Christ actually interposed as Mediator immediately upon the Fall of Man, and undertook to secure the divine Honour by obeying and suffering in the Room of a guilty World: and therefore thro' him God did offer Mercy to

Cain

Cain as well as to *Abel*, and ſhew common Favours to the World in general, as well as grant ſpecial Grace to the Elect; and that before his Death, as well as ſince. Surely none will deny, that all the Favours which Mankind did enjoy prior to Chriſt's Death, were by Virtue of his Undertaking to be Mediator, and engaging to ſecure the divine Honour; for upon any other Foot, the Governour of the World could not have granted ſuch Favours conſiſtently with his Honour.

Obj. 4. *But if Chriſt died for all, then he died in vain, ſince all are not ſaved.*

Ans. The next and immediate End of Chriſt's Death was to anſwer the Ends of moral Government, and ſo ſecure the Honour of the moral Governour, and open a Way in which he might honourably declare himſelf reconcilable to a guilty World upon their returning thro' Chriſt, and uſe Means to reclaim them; but this End Chriſt did obtain: and ſo did not die in vain. *Joh.* 3. 16. *Rom.* 3. 24, 25, 26. And the ſupreme Governour of the World will now thro' Chriſt accompliſh all the Deſigns of his Heart, to the everlaſting Honour of his great Name.

Obj. 5. *But why would God have a Door opened, that he might, conſiſtent with his Honour, offer to be reconciled to all that will return to him thro' Chriſt, when he knew that the Non-Elect would never return? And why would he have a Door opened that he might uſe Means with them, when he knew, all would be in vain, unleſs he himſelf recovered them by his All-conquering Grace, which yet he never deſigned to do?*

Ans. God deſigned to put an apoſtate World into a new State of Probation. Mankind were in a State of Probation in *Adam* their publick Head, and we all ſinned in him and fell with him in his firſt Tranſgreſſion. But God deſigned to try the Poſterity of *Adam* anew, and ſee whether they would be ſorry for their Apoſtacy, or chooſe to continue in their Rebellion. He would tender Mercy, and offer to be reconciled, and call them to return, and uſe Arguments and Motives, and promiſe and threaten; and try and ſee what they would do. He knew, Mankind would be ready to deny their Apoſtacy, and plead that they were not Enemies to God, and think themſelves very good natured; and

and would take it exceeding hard not to be believed: therefore he determined to try them, and see what they would do; and make publick Declaration thro' the World that finally he would judge every Man according to his Works, and deal with them according to their Conduct. And in the mean Time, that his Honour might be secured, he appoints his Son to be Mediator; and so thro' him proclaims the News of Pardon and Peace, and enters upon the use of Means. And now, if you ask me, "Why does he "do all this, when he knows, it will be in vain as to the "*Non-Elect*, who will never come to Repentance?"

I Answer, His knowing that all will in the Event prove ineffectual to bring them to Repentance, is no Objection against his using the Means he does. For God does not make his Foreknowledge of Events the Rule of his Conduct; but the Reason & Fitness of Things.——You may as well inquire, "Why did God raise up *Noah* to be a *Preacher* "*of Righteousness* to the old World for the Space of an "Hundred and twenty Years, when he knew they would "never come to Repentance? And why did he send all "his Servants the Prophets to the Children of *Israel*, ri-"sing early and sending, and by them command & call, "entreat and expostulate, promise and threaten, and say, "*As I live, saith the Lord God, I delight not in the Death of* "*the Sinner: turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die!* when he "knew, they would never come to Repentance? And "why did he afterwards send his Son to the same obstinate "People, when he knew they would be so far from hear-"kening, as that they would rather put him to Death?" Now, if you ask me, why the great Governour of the World uses such Means with the Non-Elect, and shews so much Goodness, Patience, Forbearance and Long-suffering, instead of sending all immediately to deserved Destruction?

I Answer, it is to try them; and to shew, that he is *the Lord God, gracious and merciful, slow to Anger and abundant in Goodness*. 'Tis fit, Creatures in a State of Probation should be tried, and he loves to act like himself; and he means in and by his Conduct to do both at once. And after obstinate Sinners have long abused that *Goodness and Forbearance*, which *should have led them to Repentance*; and have

have *after their own hard and impenitent Hearts, been treasuring up Wrath against the Day of Wrath*, the Righteousness of God's Judgment in their eternal Destruction will be most manifest. And what if God was determined not to reclaim Rebels voluntarily so obstinate, by his All-conquering Grace, but let them take their Course, seeing they were so set in their Way? What then? Was he not at Liberty? Was he bound to save them all by Exertion of his Almightiness? Might he not *have Mercy on whom he would?* And after *such Long-suffering*, might he not *shew his Wrath and make his Power known* in the eternal Destruction of those who so justly deserved it? God's last End, no Doubt, is to manifest his Perfections: and in and by his whole Conduct towards a fallen World, they will all be most illustriously displayed. *Rom.* 11. 36.

Obj. 6. *But considering that the Non-Elect are, after all, under an absolute Impossibility to believe and repent, convert and be saved; and considering that all common Mercies and Means of Grace will only render them the more inexcusable in the End, and so aggravate their Guilt and Damnation: therefore all Things considered, what seeming Good they enjoy in this World, is not of the Nature of a MERCY: it would be better for them to be without it:* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *will be better of it in the Day of Judgment than* Chorazin *and* Bethsaida: * *and therefore there is no Need to suppose, that any Thing which the Non-Elect enjoy in this World, is the Effect of Christ's Merits, but only of divine Sovereignty.*

Ans. What do you mean by *being under an absolute Impossibility to believe and repent, convert & be saved?* Using Words without determinate Ideas is one principal Thing which bewilders the World about Matters of Religion. Now will

* It may be proper just to hint the gross Absurdities implied in this Objection.----If the Non-Elect were under an absolute (*i. e.* not only a moral, but natural) Impossibility to turn to God, they would not be proper Subjects to use any Means with. And if their common Favours and Means of Grace were not of the Nature of *Mercies*, they could not aggravate their Guilt. And if it was not their own Fault, that they did not repent under the Enjoyment of Means, they would not be to Blame, nor deserve to be punished, for not repenting. ---- Men stumble into such Absurdities by using Words without determinate Ideas.

in plain *English*, *all Things are ready*, and they are invited to *come*, and there is nothing in the Way of their being saved; but—they be not sorry for their Apostacy from God, nor will be brought to it by all the Means God uses with them: they have not a Mind to return to God, nor will they be perswaded by all the most powerful Arguments that can be used: they are voluntary Enemies to God, and will not be reconciled, unless by an almighty Power and All-conquering Grace, which God is not obliged to give, and they are infinitely unworthy of, and without which, they might return, were they but of such a Temper as they ought to be: they are under no Inability, but what consists in and results from their want of a good Temper of Mind, and their voluntary Obstinacy: Sin has no Power over Men, but as they are *inclined* to it; and the Inclinations of the Heart are always voluntary and unforced. Men *love* to be inclined as they are; for otherwise their Inclinations would be so far from having any Power over them, that they would even cease to be.—Now certainly the bringing up of the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt* was of the Nature of a *Mercy*, and a *great Mercy* too indeed it was, notwithstanding that thro' their Unbelief and Perverseness they never got to *Canaan*. The Thing, in itself, was as great a *Mercy* to the Body of that Generation, as it was to *Caleb* & *Joshua*. And their bad Temper and bad Conduct, which prevented their ever coming to the promised Land, did not alter the Nature of the Thing at all, nor lessen their Obligations to Gratitude to God their mighty Deliverer. And yet, all Things considered, it had been better for them to have died in their *Egyptian* Bondage, than to have had their Carcases fall in the Wilderness in such an awful Manner.—And besides, it is evident, that the Scriptures do look upon the common Favours and Means of Grace, which the Non-Elect enjoy, under the Notion of *Mercies*; and (which otherwise could not be) on this very Ground their Guilt is aggravated, and they rendered inexcusable, and worthy of a more sore Punishment in the World to come. *Joh.* 3. 16—19. And, 15, 22, 24. *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. *Heb.* 2. 2, 3. — And if they are of the Nature of *Mercies*, then they are the Effects of Christ's Merits, as has been already proved.

And hence by the Way, we may see the Reason why the *Love* and *Goodness* of God in bringing up the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, is so mightily set forth in the old Testament, notwithstanding the Body of that Generation perished in the Wilderness: and why the *Love* and *Goodness* of God in giving his Son to die for the World, is so mightily set forth in the New-Testament, notwithstanding Multitudes of Mankind perish for ever: *viz.* It was the *Israelites* own Fault, they perished in the Wilderness, and so it is Sinners own Fault that they perish for ever. *Joh.* 3. 19. and 5, 40. And did they feel it at Heart, it would effectually stop their Mouths. For this is an undoubted *Maxim*, that the Kindnesses of God to a rebellious perverse World are not in themselves e'er the less *Mercies*, because Mankind abuse them to their greater Ruin. The Kindnesses are in themselves the same, whether we make a good Improvement of them, or no. They are just the same, and so just as great, let our Conduct be what it will. It was a great Mercy to the *Israelites* to be delivered out of *Egypt*; it was a wonderful Expression of divine Goodness: and hence 'tis said in Hos. 11. 1. *When Israel was a Child, then I LOVED him, and called my Son out of Egypt.* (And a like Expression we have in Deut. 10. 18. *God LOVETH the Stranger, in giving him Food and Raiment.*) And on the same Ground 'tis said in Joh. 3. 16. *God so LOVED the World &c.* because the Gift of Christ to die for the World was an infinite Expression of divine Goodness. And if Mankind do generally abuse this Goodness, as the *Israelites* generally did all God's Kindnesses to them, yet still the Goodness itself is just the same. A dreadful Thing therefore it is for the Non-Elect, even as aggravated a Piece of Wickedness in them as it would be in any Body else, to tread under Foot the Blood of the Son of God, and make light of all the Offers of Mercy, and neglect so great Salvation. And this above all other Things will be their Condemnation in the coming World. *Joh.* 3. 19. Never are the *Jews* at all excused, any where in the New-Testament, in their slighting the Offers of Mercy by Christ, on this Account, that they were not of the Elect. And indeed the Offers were sincere, and it was intirely their own Fault that they did not accept, and they

they deserved to be treated accordingly: *Mat.* 22. 1—7.

OBJ. 7. *But if God so loved the World, the WHOLE WORLD, as to give his only begotten Son to die for them, in the Sense explained; why does he not go thro', and perfect the Work, and save the WHOLE WORLD? according to that in Rom.* 8. 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all Things?

ANS. 1. And why did not the *King* in *Matth.* 22. who had made *a Marriage for his Son*, and sent his Servants to say to them that were bidden, *I have prepared my Dinner; my Oxen and my Fatlings are killed, and all Things are ready: Come unto the Marriage:* Why did not the King, I say, when they refused, *Compel them to come in?* Since he had done so much, why did not he go thro', and finish the Work? And this is directly to the Point in Hand, because this Parable is designed to represent that full Provision which is made for the Salvation of Sinners by the Death of Christ; and it proves that the Objection has no Force in it.

But farther,

2. Take your Bible and read from the 28th Verse to the end of that 8th Chapter of *Romans*, and you will see what the Apostle's Design is, thro' his whole Discourse. "We know," says he, "that all Things work together "for Good to them that love God, to them who are called "according to his Purpose. But how do we know it? "Why, because God is fully determined to bring them to "Glory at last. For whom he did foreknow, he also did "predestinate; and whom he did predestinate, them he "also called, and them he justified, and them he glorified. "And God was so fully determined to bring them to "Glory, and so much engaged in the Thing, that he "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; "*i.e.* US, who love God and are his elect People." (For it is of these and these only that he here is speaking.) "And "since he was so much engaged as to do this, we may de- "pend upon it that he will also freely give us all Things; "*i. e.* US, who love God and are his elect People. So "that never any Thing shall hinder our being finally

" brought to Glory, or separate us from the Love of God, " neither Tribulation, nor Persecution, nor Distress, nor " any Thing else." So that this is the Apostle's Argument: Since God was so much *engaged* to bring them to Glory who loved God and were his elect People, as that he had given his own Son *to die for that End*; they therefore might have the strongest Assurance, that he would do every Thing else which would be needful effectually to bring it about. *

But God never *designed* to bring the Non-Elect to Glory, when he gave his Son to die for the World. He designed to declare himself reconcilable to them thro' Christ, to offer Mercy, to invite them in common with others to return, and to assure all that *he that believeth shall be saved*, and to use Means with them more or less according to his Pleasure; but finally, they being obstinate, he designed to leave them to themselves, to take their own Course; and in the End to deal with them according to their Deserts. *Mat.* 23. 37, 38. and 22. 1—7. And this being the Case, the *Objection* from the Apostle's Words is evidently groundless.

As to the Opinion of the *Arminians*, that God equally *designed* Salvation for all Men, purposing to offer Salvation to all, and use Means with all, and leave all to their own Free-Will, and save those and those only, who of their own Accord will become good Men; as for this Opinion, I say, I think they never learnt it from the Bible: But rather, they seem to have been led into it, from a Notion that Mankind are so good natured, that all might, and that at least some actually would, under the Enjoyment of the common Means of Grace, become good Men, of their own Accord, *i. e.* without any such Thing as *special Grace*. Convince them that this is an Error, and they will soon give

* If we leave God's *Design* out of the Apostle's Argument, I cannot see that his Reasoning would be conclusive; any more than a like Argument would have been conclusive, if we should suppose *Moses* to have used it with the *Israelites* at the Side of the *red Sea*. " Since " God has now brought you all out of *Egypt*, and thus divided the " *red Sea* before you, and drowned your Enemies; therefore he will " now without fail bring you All to the promised Land." Which Reasoning would not have been conclusive; for the Body of that Generation died in the Wilderness, and that in a very awful Manner, notwithstanding this glorious Deliverance.

give up their Scheme, and acknowledge the Need of sovereign Grace, and see the Reasonableness and Truth of the Doctrine of Election.——— Or rather, I may say, convince them first of all, what God is, and what the Law is, and what the Nature of true Religion is; that they may know, what Conversion means, and what it means to be a good Man: and there will be no Difficulty then to convince them of the Depravity of Mankind. For what leads them to think it so easy a Thing to become a good Man, and that Men may be brought to it merely by the force of moral Suasion, is, their wrong Idea of the Nature of true Religion. If Religion be what they suppose, then no Doubt any Body may easily become good, for corrupt Nature can bear with such a Religion. But if Religion, or a Conformity to God's Law, be, what I have endeavoured to prove it to be in the former Discourse, then no Doubt Mankind are naturally diametrically opposite thereto in the Temper of their Minds: even all Mankind, *Arminians* as well as others. And all do, or might know it, if they would seriously and honestly weigh the Matter; for it is plain Fact. The *Arminians* are wont mightily to cry up Works, and plead for the moral Law, as tho' they were great Friends to it: but if their Mistakes about the moral Law might once be rectified, and they be brought really and heartily to approve it, *as holy, just and good*; one principal Source of all their Errors would be dried up: and particularly, their wrong Notions about *Election* and *universal Redemption.*

"But where was there any Love," (will the *Objector* "say) in God's giving his Son to die for the Non-Elect, or "Sincerity in his offering them Mercy; if he never designed "to bring them to Glory, but from Eternity intended to "leave them to perish in their Sins?"

And where was there any Love (*I answer*) in God's bringing the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*, or Sincerity in his offering to bring them to *Canaan*; if he never designed eventually to bring them there, but from Eternity intended to leave them to murmur and rebel, and to have their Carcases fall in the Wilderness? —The Solution in both Cases is the same, and is plainly this; as it was the *Israelites* own

Fault that they did not come to *Canaan* at last, so it is the Sinner's own Fault that he finally falls short of Glory: However, the *Israelites* were often in a Rage, and ready to say, *The Lord hath brought us into the Wilderness to kill us here*, and they murmured against God and against *Moses*, for which they were struck dead by Hundreds & Thousands: and just so Sinners do, and the same Punishment do they deserve. But had the *Israelites* felt at Heart, that it was their own voluntary Wickedness which was the *sole Cause* of their Ruin, and did Sinners feel it at Heart too, there would be no murmuring in one Case or the other, but every Mouth would be stop'd. But I have spoken to this before.

To Conclude, If this Representation of Things which I have given, be according to Truth, hence then we may learn these two Things, which indeed were what I had principally in View in dwelling so long upon this Subject and labouring to answer Objections: I say, we may learn— 1. That any poor Sinner, all the World over, who hears the Gospel & believes it, has sufficient Grounds of Encouragement, from the Freeness of God's Grace & the Sufficiency of Christ and the universal Calls of the Gospel, to venture his eternal ALL in this Way of Salvation, and may safely return to God thro' Christ in Hopes of Acceptance: And that without any particular Revelation, that *he is elected* or that *Christ died for him in particular*. "Any may come, "the vilest and the worst; and therefore I may come." And therefore such a particular Revelation, is perfectly needless: Nor could it do any Good; for the Truth of the Gospel may be depended upon, but the Truth of such a particular Revelation cannot.— 2. That any poor, sinful, guilty, broken-hearted Backslider, who groans under the Burthen of Sin as the greatest Evil, and longs to have the Power of Sin taken down, and his Corruptions slain, and himself thoro'ly subdued to God, may look up to the infinite free Grace of God thro' Jesus Christ, and pray, "Lord, "take away this Heart of Stone, and give me a Heart of "Flesh: Turn me, and I shall be turned: Lord, if thou "wilt, thou canst make me clean: O create in me a clean "Heart, and renew in me a right Spirit, and restore to me "the Joy of thy Salvation! To thy sovereign Grace and self-

" self-moving Goodness I apply my self thro' JesusChrist: " God be merciful to me a Sinner." And that whether he knows himself to be a Child of God, or no: and so whether he knows that he belongs to theNumber of theElect,or not: Nor does he need any particular Revelation, that Christ died for him in particular, or that he is elected, or that he is beloved of God: Nor would these Things do any Good to clear up his Warrant to come forMercy; becauseGod may thro' Christ give his holy Spirit to any that ask him: All that are athirst, are invited to come and take of the Waters of Life freely. " Any may come, and therefore I may " come, altho' the vilest Creature in the World."— And I appeal to all the Generation of God's Children, whether this has not been their Way of coming toGod thro'Christ, ever since the Day they first came to know the Lord. —— Sure I am, this is the Scripture-Way. God has sent out a Proclamation thro' a sinful, guilty World, inviting all to come to him thro' Jesus Christ for all Things: and given many Encouragements, by representing how free his Grace is, how sufficient Christ is, and how faithful his Promises, and that whosoever will, may come, &c. But no where in all the Bible, has he revealed it, that such and such in particular by Name among Mankind are elected, and that for these Individuals Christ died in particular, by Way of Encouragement to those particular Persons, in order to let them know that *they* might safely trust in Christ,and come to God thro' him.— But then must we be right, when we understand the Gospel and believe it, and upon *the very Encouragements which God has given*, are emboldened to return in Hopes of Acceptance: And this must be agreeable to God's Will: And to this must the Influences of the true Spirit tend. But to venture to return and look to God for Mercy merely upon any other Ground, is anti-scriptural: And whatsoeverSpirit influences thereunto,cannot therefore be from God.

And thus we see how the Door of Life is opened by Christ, our great Mediator and high Priest. And hence, Christ calls himself *the Door*. Joh. 10. 9. *I am the Door: By me if anyMan enter in, he shall be saved.* And hence also, he calls himself *the Way to the Father.* Joh. 14. 6. *I am*

the Way, the Truth, and the Life: No Man cometh to the Father but by me. For thro' him (saith the Apostle, Eph. 2. 18.) *we both have an Access by one Spirit unto the Father.* And also *thro' him God is reconciling the World to himself*, sending *Ambassadors* and *beseeching them to be reconciled.* 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.— Which leads me to the next Thing proposed.

SECTION VI.

A View of the METHODS of divine Grace *with Mankind from the Beginning of the World.*

4. I am to shew *what Methods the great Governour of the World has entered upon, in Order to put in Execution those Designs of Mercy, which he had in View, when he contrived to open this DOOR, in such a wonderful and glorious Manner, by the Interposition of his own dear Son.*

The most high God is conscious of his own infinite Excellency, his Right to, and his Authority over the Children of Men: He sees Mankind as being under infinite Obligations to love and obey him, and that the least Defect is an infinite Evil: He judges the Law to be holy, just and good, and Mankind wholly to blame for their Non-Conformity thereto, and worthy to be dealt with according to it. He knows their Contrariety to him, to his Law, and to his Gospel: He sees all these Things as they really are.— His infinite Wisdom sees how it is fit for such a one as he is, now thro' a Mediator, to conduct towards such a World as this is: He sees what a Conduct is most becoming, and, all Things considered, most meet and suitable: And to this Conduct, the perfect Rectitude of his Nature prompts and inclines him.— Upon the whole, he necessarily and freely determines to act like himself, *i.e.* like an absolute Sovereign, infinite in Wisdom, Holiness, Justice, Goodness & Truth.— This was his Determination from Eternity, this is his Determination in Time, and according to this Rule he actually proceeds, in all his Methods with a sinful, guilty, obstinate World: *Working all Things according to the Counsel of his own Will.* Eph. 1. 11. Sovereignly, and yet wisely; holily and justly, and yet as *the Lord God gracious and merciful,*

ciful, slow to Anger and abundant in Goodness and Truth. As is his Nature, such is his Conduct; and hence his Conduct exhibits to us the very Image of his Heart. Thus it is in the *Impetration*, and thus it is in the *Application* of our Redemption, and in all the Methods he takes with a guilty World in general. And hence, all his Ways are calculated to exalt God and humble the Sinner, to honour the Law and discountenance Sin, to exclude Boasting and to glorify Grace. As we shall more fully see in what follows.

(1.) As being the supreme Lord and sovereign Ruler of the whole World, he does thro' Jesus Christ the great Mediator, *the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*, by whom his Honour has been secured, he does (I say) thro' him *grant, and by an Act of Grace confirm, to the World of Mankind, a general Reprieve from that utter Ruin, which by Law was threatned, and which an apostate World were exposed unto.* Total Destruction was threatned in Case of Disobedience. *Gen.* 2. 17. *In dying thou shalt die.* i. e. Thou shalt die with a witness, thy Ruin shall be compleat. And now nothing could be expected but a dreadful Doom, and to be sealed down under everlasting Despair. But instead of this, the great God dooms the *Tempter*, and threatens utter Ruin to his new-erected Kingdom. *Gen.* 3. 14, 15. *Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed — And thy Head shall be bruised.* But guilty Man is reprieved from a total Ruin, and allowed a Space for Repentance. And the World has now stood, almost six Thousand Years, reprieved by the tender Mercy of God thro' Jesus Christ.

Indeed, certain Evils were denounced by the Majesty of Heaven as standing Monuments of his Displeasure, always to attend a guilty Race while in this World. Peculiar Sorrows were appointed to Women, and hard Labour and Toil to Men, and Sickness and Pain to both, till *Death* should put an End to their Reprieve and to their Space for Repentance. *v.* 16—19.—— And when our Day to die shall come, we are not to know: we lie at Mercy: and God acts sovereignly: so long as he pleases, so long shall we be reprieved, and no longer. And thus while tender Mercy appears in the general Reprieve, the Holiness and Justice and Sovereignty of God appear in the Manner of it.

it. God is exalted, a guilty World lies at his Mercy, they are in a Senſe continually under his Rod, and every Moment liable to drop into an eternal Hell. They are held up in his Hand, Hell gapes to receive them, and now he lets one fall and then another, now this and then that, juſt as it ſeems good in his Sight. Surely, this is awful! Surely, Mankind are in very humbling Circumſtances, & in Circumſtances wonderfully calculated to awaken them *to repent and pray to God, if peradventure their Wickedneſs may be forgiven.*

When the general Reprieve, granted to this lower World, ſhall come to a Period, then will the great Judge of the World proceed, with all who ſhall be found impenitent, *according to Law*, without any mixture of Mercy. The preſent Reprieve, granted as a Space for Repentance, is not *of the Law*, but *of mere Grace thro' Jeſus Chriſt*. Now *Grace* takes Place, & Patience, Forbearance and Long-Suffering ſit on the Throne: but then *Law* ſhall take Place, and ſtrict Juſtice reign. The Mediation of Chriſt at preſent ſecures the Honour of Law and Juſtice, and opens the Door for Grace; but then the Day of Grace will be at an End. A guilty World ſhall no longer be treated in a Way of Mercy, and favoured on Chriſt's Account; but be proceeded againſt in flaming Fire and terrible Vengeance, and every one be puniſhed according to his Deſerts.—— How long the Day of God's Patience with a guilty World is to laſt, we know not. A guilty World lies at his Mercy, and may be all ſummoned to the Bar when he pleaſes. Surely, this is awful and awakening! But this is the State in which God means to ſhew all Long-Suffering, and to exerciſe and diſplay the infinite Patience of his Nature. And ſurely, this ſhould *lead us to* Repentance!—Thus, this is one Step in a Way of Mercy, which God in his infinite Grace thro' Chriſt has taken with a guilty World. And what is the Improvement which Mankind are diſpoſed to make of it? Why, *becauſe Sentence againſt their Evil Works is not executed ſpeedily; therefore the Heart of the Sons of Men is fully ſet in them to do Evil.* Eccl. 8. 11.

(2.) Another Favour granted to Mankind in general by the great Governour of the World thro' Jeſus Chriſt, is, *a Competency of the good Things of this Life for their comfortable*

table Support, while under this Reprieve and in this new State of Probation. By Law Mankind for their Apostacy stood disinherited of every good Thing, doomed to a compleat Destruction. *Gen.* 2. 17. But now thro' a Mediator, they are dealt with in a Way of Mercy.—— 'Tis true, in token of the divine Displeasure God turned Man out of Paradise, and cursed the Ground, and subjected Man to hard Labour. *Gen.* 3. But then at the same Time, for Christ's sake, a general Grant of many good Things is made to a guilty World. They are allowed to live on God's Earth, breathe in his Air, see by the Light of his Sun, to eat of the Herb of the Field, and to eat Bread in the Sweat of their Face, to cloath themselves with the Skins of slain Beasts. *Gen.* 3. They are allowed Summer and Winter, Seed-Time and Harvest, and the Beasts of the Field are given to them. *Gen.* 8. 22. and 9. 1, 2, 3. Yea, it has been God's Way abundantly to doGood to a guilty World, *to send Rain and grant fruitful Seasons, and fill the Hearts of Men with Food and Gladness. Act.* 14. 17. So that considering we are an apostate, guilty World, we may well say with the *Psalmist, The Earth is full of the Goodness of the Lord*: Psal. 33. 5. And this notwithstanding all the Calamities which overspread the whole Earth. For we are now to attribute every Thing in our Circumstances, whereby we are better of it than the Damned in Hell be, to the mere Mercy and Goodness of God thro' Jesus Christ. Thus God reprieves a guilty World, and grants them Food and Raiment, to the Intent they may have a Space for Repentance. Surely now 'tis vile, infinitely vile, *to despise the Riches of his Goodness and Forbearance and Long-Suffering*, and not to take it in and understand it, *that the Goodness of God should lead us to Repentance:* And it is great Madness, *after our hard and impenitent Hearts to go on in our Rebellion, and treasure up Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God.* Rom. 2. 4, 5. And yet, this is the general Temper, and common Way of the World.

(3.) Another common Favour granted to Mankind upon Christ's Account, is, *a general Resurrection from the Dead:* (1 *Cor.* 15. 21.) to the Intent that all, who believe, repent and return to God thro' Jesus Christ, may be compleatly happy

happy in Soul and Body for ever. It is certain, the Law threatned Death, but made no Provision for a Resurrection. And if the Law had been executed and no Mediator provided, we have no Reason to think there ever would have been any Resurrection. And I cannot see why a general Resurrection may not be considered under the Notion of a Mercy in it self, notwithstanding many by their final Impenitency lay a Foundation for their being raised up to everlasting Shame and Confusion. I am ready to think, that to be raised from the Dead, must surely be of the Nature of a *Mercy*, and so be the Effect of Christ's Merits; but the particular Manner in which the Wicked shall be raised, may nevertheless be considered as a *Punishment*, and so be the Effect of their Sin and final Impenitency. Christ's Merit lays the Foundation for a general Resurrection, and all that believe and repent shall be raised up to Glory and compleat Blessedness, and all that die in their Sins shall be raised up to Shame and compleat Misery.

(4.) There are also diverse other Things granted to Mankind in general, which seem pretty evidently to be of the Nature of Mercies, and so to be owing to the Interposition and Merits of our glorious Mediator Christ Jesus, the only Mediator between God and a sinful, guilty World: to whose Merits and Mediation, every Thing which Mankind enjoy, which is of the Nature of a Mercy, is to be attributed. Diverse Things, I say, whereby much is done towards putting such an apostate Race of Beings into a Capacity of comfortably living together in this World, while they are in their new State of Probation. Divers Things in our Temper, which seem originally to take their Rise very much from that Temperament of Body and animal Constitution, which God our Former gives us. There is a *natural good Humour*, *a natural Compassion*, *a natural Modesty*, and *natural Affections*. These Things, in a greater or less Degree, we find to be natural to Men, and to have a very great Influence to keep under and restrain their Corruptions, and to incline and prompt to many Actions materially Good, and greatly for the Comfort of human Society and Benefit of Mankind in general. These Things do evidently keep Mankind from Abundance of Wickedness,

which

which otherwise they would commit: They have a Heart for a Thousand Abominations, but these Things restrain them. And these Things do evidently put Mankind on to a Thousand Actions materially good, which otherwise they would never do: They have a Heart bad enough to neglect them, but these Things excite them to do them.— Were it not for these and other Restraints, I see not why Mankind should not be as bad in this World, as they will be in the next. Wicked Men have no Wickedness infused into them at Death; and therefore they have no other Nature, no other Principle of Sin in their Hearts, after they are dead, than they had before: But as soon as they are dead, they are evidently no Doubt as universally contrary to God and all that is Good, as the Devils themselves. As soon as ever those Things which now restrain them, are all removed, their true Temper appears without any Disguise.— 'Tis no Doubt therefore a great Mercy, for Mankind to be thus restrained. They enjoy more Comfort, they commit less Sin, they merit less Punishment, they are under better Advantages to live together, to enjoy the Means of Grace and attend to the Offers of Mercy by Jesus Christ. And therefore it seems that all these Things ought to be attributed to the tender Mercy of God thro' Jesus Christ, *who is the Saviour of all Men, but especially of them that believe.* 1 Tim. 4. 10.

Thus, the great God, instead of executing the Sentence of the Law in all it's Severity upon a guilty World, does, thro' the Mediation of Jesus Christ, grant to Mankind in general these common Favours— They are reprieved from a total Ruin — have a comfortable Maintenance in this World allowed them — a general Resurrection is decreed— several natural Endowments are granted, to restrain from bad Actions and to prompt to Actions materially good. And hereby the Governour of the World has laid the Foundation, and prepared the Way to go on to use the Methods he designed, more immediately tending to reclaim and recover a sinful, guilty World to himself; for now Mankind are put into a Sort of a Capacity of being treated with in such a Way.

These Things ought deeply to affect Mankind. We lie under many Calamities, and yet enjoy many Mercies in this

this our natural State of Guilt and Condemnation; all which ought to be improved to awaken, convince & humble us, and lead us to repent and cry to God for pardoning Mercy and sanctifying Grace, and prediſpoſe us cordially to receive and embrace that Revelation, which God has made in his Word, of our Ruin and the Way of our Recovery.

But, thro' the great Blindneſs and Corruption of Mankind, theſe Things have had a very contrary Effect. Mankind, finding themſelves thus reprieved, and thus kindly treated by God, have many of them hereby been led to think, they are in pretty good Standing, not *by Nature Children of Wrath*, and under *Condemnation*. The Devil told *Eve*, they *ſhould not ſurely die*; ſo many are now ready to think, that the old Law, which threatned the leaſt Sin with Death, is repealed; & that we are now born into the World free from any Guilt. And Mankind, finding themſelves endowed with *natural Modeſty*, *good Humour*, *Compaſſion* &c. are ready to dream, that they are born into the World without any ſinful Corruption of Nature, but rather as holy as *Adam* in Innocency. And hence are very inſenſible of any Need of ſuch a Redeemer and Sanctifier as are provided. And ſo they are prediſpoſed to diſlike that Revelation which God has made in his Word concerning our Ruin and the Way of our Recovery. And hence Mankind are ſtrongly bent to miſunderſtand and miſinterpret and diſbelieve the Law and the Goſpel. And beſides, by this Goodneſs and Forbearance of God, Men are emboldened in Sin, as if it were not a very great Evil, nor God very much ſet againſt it. They begin to think, God is all made up of Mercy, and that they are in no great Danger. And ſo *after their hard and impenitent Hearts, they go on to treaſure up Wrath againſt the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God.* Thus God and his Goodneſs is abuſed by this vile wicked Race of apoſtate, rebellious Creatures. — And indeed, all this is no more than was expected. — Great Reaſon therefore was there for him ſo effectually to ſecure his own Honour and the Honour of his holy Law, by the Interpoſition of his own dear Son as Mediator. — And now, let Mankind be ever ſo bad, he can go on with his Methods of Mercy, to accompliſh all his Deſigns of Grace,

Grace, and all consistent with the Honour of his Holiness and Justice, Law and Government and sacred Authority.

(5.) Mankind being naturally very insensible of their sinful, guilty, ruined Estate, and totally ignorant of, and unable to find out, any Way of obtaining the divine Favour, and wholly averse in the Temper of their Hearts to a genuine Return to God; therefore God of his infinite Grace thro' Jesus Christ, has, in various Ways and diverse Manners, according to the good Pleasure of his Will, by immediate Revelation from Heaven, set before Mankind their Ruin and the Way of their Recovery, offered many Arguments, Motives and Encouragements to perswade them to return, and denounced terrible Threatnings to deter them from going on in their Rebellion, and directed them, in the use of certain Means of Grace, to seek for the inward Influences of the holy Spirit, to awaken and convince, to humble and convert and effectually recover them to God thro' the great Mediator.

(6.) And, because the most High sees, that thro' the very bad Temper of Mankind, this external Revelation, altho' most excellently adapted thereto, yet, if left to themselves, would finally prove altogether ineffectual to recover any of Mankind; yea, so very far from it, that Mankind would not so much as rightly understand or believe it, or seriously take Matters into Consideration, but would misunderstand and pervert it, and finally universally disbelieve and renounce and forget it, and not suffer it to have any Room in the World: therefore he has from the Beginning of the World and does still and will to the End of the World, by the inward Influences of his Spirit and by the outward Dispensations of his Providence, carry on, according to his sovereign Pleasure, the Work of his Grace, accomplish his eternal Purposes of Mercy, recover Sinners to himself, maintain true Religion in the World, preserve his Church, gather in all the Elect, display all his glorious Perfections in his Dealings with Mankind, and get to himself a great Name in the End: Exhibiting in his whole Conduct from first to last the most lively Image of himself.

In these two last Particulars, we have a general Account of those Methods, which God does take with a sinful, guilty

Race,

Race, more immediately tending to their Recovery: which we may see exemplified, in his Dealings with Mankind, from the Beginning.

1. In the earliest Ages of the World, *immediately after the Fall*, he began to enter upon these Methods of Grace. He taught our first Parents their Ruin and the Way of their Recovery by the promised *Seed*; and instituted Sacrifices to typify the great Atonement, which should afterwards be made for the Sins of the World. *Gen.* 3. And what he taught our first Parents, they taught their Children. And hence *Cain* and *Abel* and after-Generations learnt to worship God by Sacrifice. *Gen.* 4. 3—8. Now *Adam* lived until *Methuselah* was two Hundred and forty six Years old, and *Methuselah* lived until *Shem* was an Hundred Years old, and *Shem* lived until the Time of *Abraham* and *Isaac*, yea 'till *Isaac* was fifty Years old; so that the News of *Adam*'s Fall, of the Ruin of Mankind, and of Salvation by the *Seed of the Woman*, might easily have been handed down by Tradition from one to another, and all Mankind might have been fully acquainted with these Things.— And besides these external Teachings and Means of Grace, God granted the inward Influences of his Spirit, whereby some were effectually recovered to God, of whom were *Abel*, *Enoch* and *Noah*, who were also signalized by divine Providence. *Gen.* 4. 4. & 5. 22. & 6. 9. Compared with *Heb.* 11. 4,—7.

But while God thus early began to use Methods for the recovery of a sinful, guilty World to himself, they began early to shew their Aversion to God and Unwillingness to return. *Cain* seems, by the Sacrifice which he offered, quite insensible, that he was a fallen Creature, and that he needed an Atonement for Sin. He brought only of the Fruit of the Ground for a Thank-Offering, (like the *Pharisee* in *Luk.* 18. Whose Prayer consisted only in Thanksgiving, without any Faith or Repentance) but brought none of the Flock for a Sin-Offering, (*Gen.* 4.) altho' *without shedding of Blood there could be no Remission.* Heb. 9. 22. He was a formal impenitent Hypocrite, nor would God accept him; but *Abel* found Favour in the Sight of the Lord by Faith. *Heb.* 11. 4. And therefore *Cain* was angry at God, and enraged at his Brother, and murthered him, and cast

off

off all Religion, & gave himself up to serve his Lusts. Yea, he forsook the visible Church of God, and departed and went into the Land of *Nod*. And thus he, and afterwards his Posterity after him, join to renounce true Religion, and openly distinguish themselves from God's visible People on Earth. *Gen.*4.16. And it seems Good to the supreme Governour of the World, e'en to let them all take their Way, and act their own Nature.

For a While, true Religion was maintained in the Family of *Seth*. Gen. 4. 26. And to put Honour upon the Practice thereof, *Enoch* was translated to Heaven. *Gen.*5.24. But yet, in Process of Time, they degenerated, and became so much like the Rest of the World, like the Posterity of *Cain*, that they were disposed to relish their Company, and marry their Daughters. *Gen.* 6. 2. And then presently the Contagion spread, *The Wickedness of Mankind* in general *was great upon the Earth*, (℣. 5.) *All Flesh corrupted their Ways, and the Earth was filled with Violence.* (℣.11,12.) And now the great Governour of the World raises up *Noah*, and makes him *a Preacher of Righteousness*; and *Noah* preaches, and God waits an Hundred and Twenty Years, but Mankind will not be reformed, and therefore God gives over that Generation, and drowns the World by a universal Deluge.— *First*, Mankind break thro' all the Restraints lying upon them, discover the very Temper of their Hearts, publickly shew their Aversion to God, their Disregard of his Grace, their utter Unwillingness to return, and their perverse Propensity to go on in their Rebellion.—*Secondly*, God, thro' the Mediator, uses Means to reclaim them, and shews all Long-suffering, and so tries them.—*Thirdly*, They, remaining obstinate, trampling under Foot his Authority, and despising his Goodness, he at last in a most publick Manner executes righteous Vengeance upon them. — He displays his infinite Goodness and Patience, in waiting so long and using so many Means for their Recovery: He displays his Sovereignty, in waiting but just so long, and in taking but just so much Pains with them; He displays his Holiness, Justice and Truth, in bringing that Destruction upon them at the very Time before threatned: and in the whole, he displays his infinite Wisdom; his whole Conduct,

being excellently well calculated, to make all ſucceeding Generations *know that he is the LORD*, and ſuited to maintain the Honour of his Holineſs, Juſtice, Goodneſs and Truth, of his Law and Government and ſacred Authority. And thus we ſee what Methods God took with the old World, together with the Reſult of all.

And now,

2. We come to take a brief View of his Ways with Mankind *ſince the Flood*, and of their Carriage towards him. There is no Doubt but that *Noah* had received by Tradition and well underſtood the Fall of *Adam*, the Ruin of Mankind, the Way of Recovery by *the Seed of the Woman*, the Inſtitution, End and Deſign of Sacrifices. And there is no Doubt but that he faithfully inſtructed his Children, in what he himſelf knew. And they might have taught their Children, and they the Generation following, and ſo all the World might have known the Way of Salvation thro' a Mediator. And 'tis certain, that this would have been the Caſe, had Mankind been in a Diſpoſition ſufficiently to have prized the Knowledge of theſe Things. But *when they knew God*, by parental Inſtruction, *they did not glorify him as God, neither were they thankful* for theſe Advantages which infinite Goodneſs had granted them. Rom. 1.21. *But became vain in their Imaginations, and their fooliſh Heart was darkened.* And they ſoon loſt the Knowledge of true Religion, and fell off to Idolatry, and *changed the Glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like unto corruptible Man, and to Birds and four-footed Beaſts and creeping Things*, Ver. 23. *For they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge*, Ver. 28. And when Mankind, preſently after the Flood, did thus publickly diſcover the Temper of their Hearts, by renouncing the true God and true Religion, and falling away to Idolatry and Superſtition and all Manner of Wickedneſs: I ſay, when Mankind, notwithſtanding the late awful Warning they had had by the univerſal Deluge; did thus quickly ſhew themſelves ſo intirely diſpoſed to their ſinful and rebellious Courſes: *For this Cauſe God gave them up.* ℣. 24, 26, 28. even ſuffered them to take their own Way and run their own Ruin.—The whole Earth might all have been God's People and his

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visible Family, but they would not. They might all have retained the Knowledge of the true God and of the Way to Life, but they *did not like to*; and God was not obliged to make them, and therefore he even let them take their own Course: and yet took Care, in after Ages, not to leave himself without Witness, but by many wonderful Works to let all the Nations of the Earth *know that he was the LORD.* And if any would repent and return, he made Provision for their Reception as Proselytes into the *Jewish* Church. And doubtless here and there one, from Age to Age, by the inward Influences of his blessed Spirit, were brought so to do; and *the rest were blinded*; as is said in a parallel Case, *Rom.* 11. 7.

And now the Knowledge of the true God & of true Religion must presently have been lost from off the Face of the whole Earth, and never have been recovered, and *Satan* had the most full Possession of the whole World to the latest Posterity, had not free and sovereign Grace interposed in a most wonderful Manner in this dark and awful Juncture. But in this very Season, God was pleased of his own mere Goodness and sovereign Pleasure, still thro' the appointed Mediator, by the gracious Influences of his Spirit, and by immediate Revelations, and by the special Dispensations of his Providence, to preserve to himself a Seed to serve him.— He called *Abram* alone, as it were, from the rest of the World, and blessed him; he made farther Revelations to him touching the *promised Seed*, and entred into a Covenant to be his God and the God of his Children after him. And now, a new World of Wonders begin to open to our View, in the divine Dispensations towards *Abraham* and his Seed. *Gen.* 12. &c.

Note, While God was doing these Things with *Abraham*, the rest of the World grew Wicked apace. And therefore God thought fit, to give a Specimen of the Temper of his Heart, and let the Nations *know that he was the LORD, by raining Fire and Brimstone out of Heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah*, who were remarkably Wicked; and at the same Time delivering *righteous Lot. Gen.* 19. — A Dispensation so remarkable, and never the like before heard of, that no doubt it flew like Lightning all the World over,

and spread Terror and Surprize thro' the guilty Nations. Howsoever, *for all this, they turned not to the Lord.*

Well, *Abraham* is circumcised with all his Household, and true Religion is taught and maintained in his Family, and *Isaac* his Son, and *Eleazer* his Servant, seem to have been savingly wrought upon by divine Grace. And God blesses *Abraham*, and he becomes very great; and God protects him wherever he goes, to the Honour of his great Name, in the midst of an idolatrous World. Nevertheless, the World instead of growing wiser and better by all this, which doubtless was heard of and much wondered at among the Nations, they grew worse and worse. — Yea, Wickedness appears openly in *Abraham*'s Family it self. *Ishmael* discovers a bad Spirit; He mocks at *Isaac*, Gen. 21. 9. *And he that was born after the Flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit*, Gal. 4. 29. So that he was, in a Sort, excommunicated and cast out of God's visible Family. And it is not long before true Religion is a Thing unknown among his numerous Posterity. And they who were of the Seed of *Abraham* according to the Flesh, were now numbred with the *Heathen*. Thus, after this Sort it fared with *Cain* the first Persecutor, and thus it fares with *Ishmael*, for the warning of all godless and carnal Professors. And yet from Age to Age this same Temper has appeared, and yet still does appear, altho' perhaps this Sin, from the beginning of the World to this Day, has never yet gone unpunished.

Now, it was said, *In* Isaac *shall thy Seed be called.* And with him God renewed the Covenant, and to him the Promises were repeated, and God blessed him, and he became very great; and he also was under a special divine Protection. Yet there was a *profane Esau* in his Family, who made so light of the spiritual Blessings of *Abraham*, as, for a mere Trifle, to sell his *Birth-right*. And he afterwards became a Persecutor of his Brother *Jacob*, and his Posterity soon lost the Knowledge of the true God and of the true Religion, and degenerated into a State of *Heathenism*.

Nor can it be attributed to any Thing but the free and sovereign Grace of God, that *Jacob* and his Seed did not do so too. But so it was; for so it seemed Good in the Eyes

Eyes of him, who has *Mercy on whom he will have Mercy*, and whose *Purpose according to Election always stands independent on Works.* Rom. 9. 11. I say, so it was, thro' the Power of him, *who worketh all Things according to the Counsel of his own Will*, that when all the other Nations of the Earth were suffered to renounce the true God and the true Religion, that *in Jacob God was known, and his Name was great in Israel.* — Never was there a Nation, which discovered a stronger Propensity to Idolatry & all Manner of Wickedness than they. And notwithstanding all the mighty Restraints, by God laid upon them, they were almost perpetually breaking thro' all, and rushing on like the Horse into the Battle. Neither Warnings, nor Threatnings, nor the Authority of God, nor the Tears of their Prophets, nor the most terrible Judgments, were ever able effectually to restrain that People and turn them to God. And had not God always by his special Grace, kept a *Remnant* for himself, they would have been like *Sodom* and like to *Gomorrah. Isai.* 1. 2—9. *Rom.* 11. 2—7.

Now the divine Perfections were most illustriously displayed, in the divine Conduct towards this People, from Age to Age; and that not only before their Faces, but also in the Eyes of all the Nations round about them. Marvellous Things were wrought in *Egypt*, and Wonders at the *Red Sea*, and forty Years in the Wilderness, which no Doubt did ring thro' the World, and were enough to have made all the Earth *know that he was the LORD*, and, but for their perverse Stubbornness, to have brought them all to worship him and him only. But all this was so far from reclaiming the *Heathen* Nations, that it hardly tamed the *Israelites* themselves. But they rebelled at *Tiberah*, and at *Massah*, and at *Kibroth-Hattaavah*, and were perpetually *provoking the Lord to Wrath.* Deut. 9. *When he slew them, then they sought him: And returned and enquired early after God. Nevertheless, they did flatter him with their Mouth, and lied unto him with their Tongues. For their Heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant*, Psal. 78. 34—37. And many a Time were they within a Hair's Breadth of Destruction, and would surely have been

utterly destroyed, but that *he wrought for his great Name's sake.* Exod. 32. Num. 14. Ezek. 20.

So again, in the Days of *Joshua*, he divided *Jordan, and drove out the Heathen before them, and gave them their Land in Possession, and made the Tribes of Israel dwell in their Tents. Yet they afterwards tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his Testimonies, but turned back and dealt unfaithfully like their Fathers: they provoked him to Anger with their high Places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven Images.* Psal. 78. 54—58. *Judg.* 2. 6—20. And now for the Space of many Years, God, by raising up *Judges* and by sending *Prophets* and executing Judgments, did labour to reform them; but all in vain: For *they quickly turned aside like a deceitful Bow.* However in the mean while, the Goodness and Patience of God on the one Hand, and his Holiness and Justice on the other, were illustriously displayed by his wonderful Works in the midst of the Earth, to be sounded out among all Nations; that all the Earth might *know that he was the LORD.*

In the Days of *David* and *Solomon*, God *wrought for his great Name's sake*, and exalted his People, and made *Israel* honourable in the Sight of all Nations; yet were they not sincere in his Sight: and when outward Restraints were afterwards taken off, they soon discovered the hidden Temper of their Hearts, that they did not care for God or his Worship, but liked *Dan* & *Bethel*, as well as the Temple at *Jerusalem.* Thus did the ten Tribes; nor was their treacherous Sister *Judah* more sincere. When a good King reigned, they would pretend to be good; & when a bad King reigned, they stood ready for Idols. And now God sent Judgment upon them Time after Time, and sent all his Servants the Prophets, saying, *O do not this abominable Thing which my Soul hateth:* but they would not hearken. *The Lord God of their Fathers sent to them by his Messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because he had Compassion on his People and on his Dwelling-Place: but they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets, until the Wrath of God arose against his People, till there was no Remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the King of the Chaldees, and gave them all into his Hand.* 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16, 17. However,

However, God was tenderly touched at the publick Reproach and Dishonour, to which his great Name was exposed in the Eyes of insulting Nations all around, who *claped their Hands, and stamped with their Feet, and rejoyced with all their Heart*, for what was done to the People called by his Name, glorying that their GOD was no better than the *dumb Idols* which they served. WhereforeGod raised up the Prophet *Ezekiel*, who clears up God's Conduct towards his People, in *Chapters* 16th and 18th and on. And dooms the neighbouring Nations in the Name of God, declaring what Judgment should come upon them from the Hand of God for their insulting, whereby they should be made to *know that He was the LORD*, as in the 25th to *Chap.* 31.—— And now also *Daniel* and his Companions were by God raised up, that by them his Name might become great in the Eyes of all Nations. And for them he works such Deliverances as to constrain the haughty Monarchs of the Earth to issue out their Decrees thro' all the World, that none should *speak any Thing amiss* against the God of *Shadrach*, *Meshack* and *Abednego*, upon Pain of being *cut in Pieces*, and their *Houses made a Dunghill.*—— And that in all their Dominions Men should *fear and tremble* before the God of *Daniel. Dan.* 3. 29, and 6. 26. Surely the infinite Wisdom of God appears most wonderfully, in all the astonishing Methods which he has taken to make himself known, & to keep up theHonour of his great Name among such a wicked, God-hating Race of Beings!

And now all this while, there was nothing but the infinite Goodness, and free and sovereign Grace of God, together with his Covenant Faithfulness, to move him, not to cast off and utterly reject his People, and let them be scattered among the Heathen, and their Name perish from off the Earth. It was for *his great Name's sake* that he wrought Salvation for them from Time to Time. *Ezek.* 20. When there was no Motive in them, but every Thing to the contrary; then for his own Sake he undertook *to write his Law in their Hearts and put it in their inward Parts, to be their God and make them his People, and to remember their Iniquities no more against them, and to bring them back to their own Land, and plant them and build them up.* Ezek. 36. 16—34.

And however, by the *Babyloniſh* Captivity the *Jewiſh* People were pretty thoro'ly cured of their idolatrous Diſpoſition; yet after their Return, and after the godly Men of that Generation were dead, they ſoon began to ſhew that they were as averſe to God and the Life of Religion as ever. And yet all theſe Things notwithſtanding, God is determined to make one Trial more. He had ſent one Servant after another, and they had been beaten, and ſtoned, and put to Shame, and ſent away empty. Now therefore he ſends his *only Son*, to ſee if they will hear him: and behold they ſay, *Come let us kill him.* Mat. 21. 33—39. Wherefore at laſt, God determines to caſt off that Nation. *ver.* 41. And to go and try the Heathen, whom, for a long Time, he had ſuffered to take their own Ways.

And now, to his Apoſtles Chriſt gives Commiſſion, to *go into all the Earth, and preach the Goſpel to every Creature, and he that believeth*, ſays he, *ſhall be ſaved*; *and he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* And they run, and preach, and cry, *Repent and turn from your dumb Idols to ſerve the living God.* And had not they been ſtopped, they would ſoon have carried the News all round the World. But *Jews* and *Gentiles* combine together, and Earth and Hell are in Arms to defeat the Deſign. Nevertheleſs, *as many as were ordained to eternal Life believed.* And God carried on his Work thro' a Sea of Blood, and in about three Hundred Years conquered the *Roman* Empire.

No ſooner is this done, but the *Myſtery of Iniquity* begins to work, and *the Man of Sin* to be revealed. The Devil and his Servants turn their Coat, and under the Cloak of Religion and good Order, eſtabliſh the Kingdom of *Satan* in a new Form: For it is the Nature of Mankind to hate true Religion. And now *Antichriſt* reigns, and *ſcatters the holy People, and wears out the Saints of the moſt High, for a Time, and Times, and half a Time.* In the mean while, *The Woman flies into the Wilderneſs, the Witneſſes propheſy in Sackcloth*, until at laſt *the Witneſſes* themſelves *are ſlain.* And now Religion is driven even juſt out of the World, and there had been no Hope, but that *God awoke as one out of Sleep, like a mighty Man that ſhouteth by Reaſon of Wine.* And behold *the Spirit of Life from God enters into*

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the two Witnesses, that is, *Luther* and *Calvin*, and others their Contemporaries; *and they stood upon their Feet, and great Fear fell upon them which saw them.* And God put them out of their Enemies Reach. *And there was a great Earthquake, and a tenth Part of the City fell.* Rev. 9. And a glorious Day began to dawn.

But now, it is not long, before many turn Hereticks and Enthusiasts, and the World rises in Arms, and by Fire and Sword endeavour to demolish the Redeemer's Kingdom. However, God wrought for his great Name's sake, and has ever since been working, and will go on conquering and to conquer, until all the Nations of the Earth are brought into Subjection to his Son.

Thus we have taken a brief View of the Methods which God has taken to recover a sinful, guilty World, to himself: The *external Means* we have chiefly dwelt upon. Upon the *internal*, something farther shall be added presently. But let us first make a few *Remarks*.

Remark 1. Had not Mankind been wholly to Blame, they might *all* of them from the Beginning have enjoyed the Benefit of divine *Revelation*. Nothing secluded them therefrom, but their own bad Temper and bad Conduct.— And had not Mankind been wholly to Blame, they might all of them have enjoyed the Gospel, and had it preached all over the World to this Day. Nothing has hindered it but their own perverse Obstinacy, their hating the Light, and hating the Truth.— Strange it is therefore, that some Men of Learning should be so full of Charity for the *Heathen*, who thus hate God, despise Christ, and reject the Gospel. *

Rem.

* But perhaps some will be ready to say, that *there may be many honest Persons among the* Heathen, *who never heard of the Gospel, and never rejected it, who may stand fair for Heaven.*

Answ. There is a Number of such honest Sort of Persons among Christians, but their natural Enmity to God and Christ and Gospel-Grace is found to be as great as others. And sometimes *Publicans* and *Harlots* enter into Heaven before them.— Surely none of them more honest than the *young Man* in the Gospel, nor ever arrived to greater Attainments; and therefore all of them might do as he did, if under the same Circumstances. That natural Kind of Honesty, many Times is an Occasion

Rem. 2. Mankind have manifeſted the higheſt Degree of *Averſion* to God and true Religion from the *Beginning* of the World, and that almoſt in all poſſible Ways. Hundreds, and Thouſands, and Millions, have they in their Rage put to Death, and that in the moſt barbarous and cruel Manner.—— Strange it is therefore, that ſo many Matters of Fact have not to this Day convinced Mankind, that they are are truly Enemies to God.—— Strange, that they can have the Face to make the old Pretence, and ſay, *If we had been in the Days of our Fathers, we would not have been Partakers with them, in the Blood of the Prophets.* Mat. 23. 30. When all the Time, from Age to Age, they have been acting over the old Scene.

Rem. 3. It has been owing wholly and entirely to the free Grace and almighty Power of God, that the *Church* has been *preſerved*, and true Religion not driven clean out of the World: It is one of the greateſt Miracles that ever was wrought.

Rem. 4. God has always acted *ſovereignly* in chooſing what Family, Nation or Nations he would preſerve true Religion among; *all* being by Nature equally averſe to God, and equally unworthy: and has always acted *juſtly* in giving over other Families and Nations for their Sin and Apoſtacy.

Rem. 5. The whole *Scheme* of the divine Conduct has been moſt *excellently calculated* to diſplay all the divine Perfections to the beſt Advantage: And it does exhibit to us the very Image of his Heart in ſtrong and lively Colours.

But to proceed,

Altho' the external Means of Grace and remarkable Diſpenſations of Providence perhaps may in a Meaſure ſometimes reſtrain Mankind, and bring them to a feigned Submiſſion to God and his Laws; yet ſuch is their rooted Enmity and entire Averſion to God and true Religion, that not

caſion of Men's being hardened againſt Chriſtianity; for they are very ready to ſay, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other Men.* Like him in *Luk.* 18. Doubtleſs theſe *honeſt Heathen* would do as their Fathers did, had they the Opportunity. So the *honeſt Jews* did. See *Matt.* 23. 28—33.

not one will hereby be brought to repent and sincerely turn to God. *Psal.* 78. 34—37. & 81. 8—12. *Isai.* 5. 1—7. Nothing short of those inward Influences of the SPIRIT, which are Almighty & All-conquering, will effectually attain the End. *Mat.* 11. 20—27. *Eph.* 1. 19. — And therefore besides the *external Means of Grace*, God has as it were taken a World of Pains with one and another of Mankind *by the inward Influences of his SPIRIT.*—The external Means indeed, which have been used, are more open to Observation; and so also is that external Opposition which Mankind have made; but the same Ends which God has been pursuing by the external Means, *viz.* to convince Mankind of their sinful, guilty, ruined State, and bring them to return to God thro' a Mediator; the same has he been pursuing, by the inward Influences of his Spirit: and the same Opposition which has openly appeared against the Means of Grace, has also secretly wrought mightily in the Hearts of Men against the inward Influences of the Spirit. Mankind are as much inclined to resist the SPIRIT, as they be the *Word* of God, and that for the same Reason and from the same Temper; because both drive at the same Thing, a Thing most contrary to their Corruptions.

Perhaps there are *some* whom God never vouchsafes at all to strive with by his Spirit, and these are ready to think there is no such Thing.—— *Others*, are a little awakened, and from Self-Love, the Fears of Hell, and the Hopes of Heaven, they reform their Lives a little, and set about some external Duties, and so think to make Amends for their past Sins, and recommend themselves to the divine Favour; but are as great Enemies as ever to the Power of Religion: and here God leaves them to perish.— *Others* are carried farther, and become more strict and painful, but still from the same Principles; and there they are left to perish.— Not one takes one Step in earnest, unless he is driven to it; nor goes one Step farther than he is driven: and therefore God leaves one here, and another there, as seems good in his Sight. They do not *like to retain God in their Knowledge*, and therefore he *gives them over to a reprobate Mind*, as those spoken of in *Rom.* 1. 28.——*Some* indeed are carried very far by the common Influences of the

the holy Spirit, *they are enlightened, they taſte of the heavenly Gift, and of the Powers of the World to come, and are made Partakers of the holy Ghoſt*; and yet after all *fall away*, and periſh. *Heb.* 6. They have a great Senſe of their ſinful, guilty, undone Eſtate, of the Wrath of God, and Dreadfulneſs of Damnation, and are mightily brought down; and then have a great Senſe of the Mercy of God, the dying Love of Chriſt, and the Glory of Heaven: and they think they are converted, and they are raviſhed with the Thought. However, in the End, all is turned to feed their Pride and their Preſumption, and to harden and embolden them in Sin. They are not ſo much afraid of Sin now, becauſe they are confident they ſhall never go to Hell. And many Times this Sort of People, thro' the great ſwelling of ſpiritual Pride and the immediate Influences of *Satan*, come to have ſtrange Experiences, and turn to be ſtrange Creatures, and broach ſtrange Errors, and ſeem to be near entirely forſaken by God and Reaſon and Conſcience: and yet, (yea, and by the ſame Means) get to be the *holieſt* Creatures in the World, in their own Account. — But while the Sinners with whom the holy Spirit ſtrives, do many of them turn out after this Sort; ſome in one Way, and ſome in another; there are *others* with whom God makes thoro' Work; that is, makes them thoro'ly underſtand and feel their ſinful, guilty, helpleſs, undone Eſtate, and ſee into and believe the Goſpel Way of Salvation thro' Jeſus Chriſt, and return home to God in that Way. And now they *are kept by the Power of God thro' Faith unto Salvation.* 1 Pet. 1. 5. And here God has *Mercy on whom he will have Mercy.* —— And even ſo it has been as to the external Means of Grace from the beginning of the World. With *ſome*, God has taken more Pains and longer; and with *others*, leſs Pains and ſhorter: but when all the reſt of the World degenerated to *Heatheniſm*, God took effectual Methods with the *Iſraelites* to keep them from doing ſo too.— And thus, in a reſembling Manner, he does with all the ſpiritual Seed of *Abraham*, with his Elect; whereby in Spight of all Oppoſition, they are brought to Glory at laſt: they are fed with *Manna* every Day; the *Pillar of Cloud* by Day, and

of

of Fire by Night, is their continual Guide: and *the Rock which follows them is Christ:* i. e. They are fed and are guided, they live and are refreshed, and are helped to hold on their Way, by continual Influences from on high, by constant Communications of divine Grace. And so *the Path of the Just is like the shining Light, which shines more and more to the perfect Day.*

REMARKS. Never is any poor Sinner under the Light of the Gospel, by God passed by, without ever being awakened by the Holy Spirit, but God sees he is deaf to the Voice of his Word, and hates to be awakened, and loves to go on secure.—Never is any awakened Sinner forsaken by the Spirit of God, and left to take his own Way, and run his own Ruin, but that first he resisted and grieved the holy Spirit, and stifled Conviction, and rent away, as it were, out of God's Hands.—And never is a poor Sinner savingly bro't home to God, and trained up for Heaven; but that, from first to last, it was absolutely and entirely owing to the infinite Goodness, free Grace, and almighty Power of God. And indeed, thus will it appear at the great Day of Judgment, that all who perish are wholly to blame, and all that are saved will have none to glory in but the Lord. — But I have elsewhere so much insisted upon the Nature of the Influences of the holy Spirit, that I must not here enlarge.

Thus the Way to Life is opened by Christ Jesus, and all are invited to return and be saved. And thus we see the Methods which God takes for the Recovery of a sinful, guilty World. And from all that has been said we may draw these INFERENCES.

1. It is undoubtedly the Duty of poor Sinners to be *deeply affected* with all these wonderful Methods of divine Grace, and to *Strive and Labour with the greatest Painfulness and Diligence* to fall in with the Design of the Gospel, to be sensible of their sinful, guilty, undone Estate, and to look to the free Grace of God thro' Jesus Christ for Relief, and to repent and return to God thro' him, *Luk.* 13. 24. *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate.* Some are of the Opinion, that because the best Sinners can do, while Enemies to God in their Hearts, is, as to the *Manner* of it, sinful and odious in the Eyes of the divine Holiness, that therefore their best

Way

Way is to do nothing, but to ſit ſtill and wait for the Spirit. But nothing is more contrary to Scripture or Reaſon. The Scripture ſays, *Strive to enter:* And Reaſon teaches, that when the God of Heaven, the great Governour of the World, is thus coming out after guilty Rebels in a Way of Mercy, it becomes them to be deeply affected thereat, and to exert all their rational Powers in Oppoſition to their Sloth and Corruptions, labouring to lie open to the Means of Conviction, avoiding every Thing that tends to promote Security, and to render ineffectual the Methods of divine Grace, and practiſing every Thing that tends to their farther Awakening. And O let this be remembred, that it is Sinners reſiſting the Methods of Grace, which cauſes God to give them over. Pſal. 81. 11, 12, 13. *But my People would not hearken to my Voice: and Iſrael would none of me. So I gave them up to their own Hearts Luſt: and they walked in their own Counſels. O that my People had hearkened unto me, and* Iſrael *had walked in my Ways!*

2. From what has been ſaid we may learn, that it is Madneſs and Folly for poor Sinners to uſe the Means of Grace under a Notion of *doing their whole Duty*, and ſo *pacify their Conſcience.* The Means of Grace are deſigned in the firſt Place to convince Sinners of their ſinful, guilty, ruined State; and for them to forget, totally forget, this their *End*, and to go about to attend upon them under a Notion of doing that *Duty* which they owe to God, as ſomething in Lieu of that perfect Obedience which the Law requires, is quite to loſe the Benefit of the Means of Grace; yea, to thwart their very Deſign: and tends to keep Men from Conviction and Converſion, and ſeal them down in ſpiritual Security.—That which God directs them to do, to the End their Conſciences might be more awakened, they do, that their Conſciences might be more quieted. The Means which were appointed to make them more ſenſible of their Need of Chriſt and Grace, they uſe to make themſelves the more inſenſible thereof.

3. Sinners are not to uſe the Means of Grace under a Notion of making Amends for their paſt Sins, and recommending themſelves to God: *Rom.* 10. 3. Nor under a Notion that by their ſtrongeſt Efforts they ſhall be ever able to

to renew their own Nature : *Eph.* 2. 1. Nor under a Notion they can do any Thing at all to prevail with God to renew them. *Rom.* 11. 35, 36.—But on the contrary, in the Use of the Means of Grace, they are to seek for and labour after a thorough Conviction, that they can neither make any Amends for their past Sins, nor in the least recommend themselves to God, that they cannot renew their own Nature, nor in the least move God to shew them this Mercy : to the intent, that being thus convinced of their ruined, helpless State, they may be prepared to look to the free Mercy and sovereign Grace of God thro' Christ for all Things : which is the very Thing that the Gospel aims at. *Rom.* 3. 9.—26. and which the Means of Grace are designed to promote, & bring them to : and to which the Spirit of God, by his inward Influences, does in the Use of Means, finally bring all who are saved. *Rom.* 7. 8, 9. *Gal.* 3. 24.

For Sinners to use the Means of Grace under the other Notions aforesaid, is practically to say, " We are not fallen, " sinful, guilty, helpless, undone Creatures, nor do we need " the Redeemer or the Sanctifier, which God has provided, " nor do we lie at his Mercy, or intend to be beholden to " his mere sovereign Grace. If we have sinned, we can " make Amends for it : if we have displeased God, we can " pacify him again. If we are Wicked, we can become " Good : or if we do as well as we can, and then want any " further Help, God is obliged to help us."

If therefore Sinners would take the wisest Course to be the better for the Use of the Means of Grace, they must try to fall in with God's Design, and with the Spirit's Influences, and labour to see and feel their sinful, guilty, condemned, helpless, undone Estate. For this End, they must forsake vain Company, leave their Quarelling and Contention, drop their inordinate worldly Pursuits, and abandon every Thing which tends to keep them secure in Sin and quench the Motions of the Spirit ; and for this End must they read, hear, meditate and pray, compare themselves with God's holy Law, try to view themselves in the same Light that God does, and pass the same Judgment upon themselves : that so they may be in a Way to approve of the Law, and to admire the Grace of the Gospel, to judge

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and condemn themſelves, and humbly to apply to the free Grace of God thro' Jeſus Chriſt for all Things, and thro' Him to return to God.

Thus we have gone thro' what was propoſed under this *third general Head:* We have conſidered the Neceſſity there was of Satisfaction for Sin, and of a perfect Righteouſneſs: We have conſidered what Satisfaction for Sin has been made, and what a Righteouſneſs wrought out, and wherein their Sufficiency conſiſts: We have conſidered how the Way of Life has been opened by the Means: and we have conſidered what Methods God has actually entered upon, for the Recovery of loſt Sinners to himſelf.— And thus now upon the whole we ſee, upon what Grounds the great Governour of the World conſidered Mankind as being in a periſhing Condition, and whence his Deſigns of Mercy originally took their Riſe, and what Neceſſity there was for a Mediator and Redeemer, and how the Way to Life has been opened by Him whom God has provided: and ſo may now paſs to the next Thing propoſed.

SECTION VII.

Shewing the Nature of a genuine COMPLIANCE *with the* GOSPEL.

IV. To ſhew *the true Nature of a ſaving Faith in Chriſt.* And becauſe by the Whole, I am to explain the Nature of the Goſpel, and of a genuine Compliance therewith, therefore I will begin with a more general View of Things, and afterwards proceed to a more diſtinct Survey of Faith in particular.

NOW, a genuine Compliance with the Goſpel, in general, conſiſts in a ſpiritual and divine Sight and Senſe of the great Truths therein preſuppoſed and revealed; and in a firm Belief of thoſe Truths, and an anſwerable Frame of Heart. As is evident from 2 *Cor.* 4. 3,4,6. 1 *Theſ.* 2. 13. *Mat.* 13. 23. *Joh.* 8. 32.

'Tis *divine Light* imparted by the Spirit of God to the Soul, which lays the Foundation of all. *Mat.* 11. 25. *Gal.* 1. 16. 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. This *ſpiritual* and *divine Light* according

ding to the Language of St. *Paul*, *shines in the Heart*, and consists in the *Knowledge of GLORY*, 2 Cor. 4. 6. That is, in a *Sense* of MORAL BEAUTY, a *Sense* of that Beauty there is in the MORAL PERFECTIONS of GOD, and in all spiritual and divine Things, that HOLY BEAUTY which is peculiar to spiritual and divine and holy Things, of which every *unholy* Heart is perfectly insensible. 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. 6. And by *it*, Things are made to appear to us in a Measure as they do to God himself, and to the Angels & Saints in Heaven. And so by *it*, we are made to change our Minds, and are brought to be of God's Mind concerning Things. And so we are hereby disposed to understand, believe, entertain and embrace the Gospel. *Joh.* 8. 47.

GOD the great Governour of the World, who sees all Things as being what they are, does in the Gospel consider Mankind as *perishing*, as fallen, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless and undone. He looks upon the original Constitution with *Adam* as holy, just and good; and that by and according to that Constitution, he might have damned the whole human Race, consistent with his Goodness, and to the Honour of his Holiness and Justice: He looks upon the Law of Nature as holy, just and good; and that by and according to that, he might damn a guilty World, consistent with his Goodness, and to the Honour of his Holiness and Justice. Now by this *divine Light* we are brought to look upon Things as God does, and to have an answerable Frame of Heart.

Again, GOD the great Governour of the World, who sees all Things as being what they are, does in the Gospel consider a guilty World as lying at his Mercy. He saw that he was under no Obligations to pity them in the least, or in the least to mitigate their Punishment: much less under any Obligations to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life: and still much less under any Obligations, by his holy Spirit to subdue and recover such obstinate Rebels, who hate him and his Son, his Law and his Gospel, and are perfectly averse to a Return. He saw a guilty World lie at his Mercy; and that he was at Liberty to have Mercy or not to have Mercy, according to his sove-

reign Pleasure; and that it was fit & becoming his glorious Majesty to act as a Sovereign in this Affair. And now by this *divine Light* we are brought to look upon Things as God does, and to have an answerable Frame of Heart.

Again, GOD the great Governour of the World, who sees all Things as being what they are, at the same Time that he designs Mercy for a guilty World, does consider a Mediator as being necessary to answer the Demands of the broken Law, and secure the divine Honour. In such a *perishing* Condition he sees Mankind; so guilty, so justly condemned, that it would be inconsistent with the divine Perfections, and contrary to all good Rules of Government, to pardon & save such wicked Hell-deserving Rebels, without some proper Atonement for their Sin and suitable Honour done to his Law. But the Honour of his Holiness and Justice, Law and Government is sacred in his Eyes, and of infinite Importance, and must be maintained: better the whole World be damned than they in the least be sullied. And now by this *divine Light* we are brought to look upon Things as God does, and to have an answerable Frame of Heart.

Moreover, GOD the great Governour of the World, who sees all Things as being what they are, views his only begotten Son as a meet Person for a Mediator, and himself as having sufficient Power to authorize him to the Work. Of his sovereign Self-moving Goodness, he, in his infinite Wisdom, contrives the whole Scheme, lays the whole Plan, and puts his Design in Execution; the Door of Mercy is opened, the News of Pardon and Peace is sent thro' a guilty World, and all are invited to return home to God thro' Jesus Christ: and God looks upon this Way of Salvation as being glorious for God, and safe for the poor Sinner. And now by this *divine Light* we are brought rightly to understand these Things, and look upon them as God does, and believe them, & to have an answerable Frame of Heart.

Lastly, GOD the great Governour of the World does, in the Gospel, consider our return unto him thro' Jesus Christ, not only as a *Duty* to which we are under infinite Obligations, but also as a *Priviledge* of infinite Value; and in this View of the Case, he *commands* and *invites* us to return.

turn. And now by this *divine Light* we are brought to look upon this also as God does, and to judge it the *fittest* and *happiest* Thing in the World to return unto him thro' Jesus Christ, and to have an answerable Frame of Heart. For,

By this *Light* we come to have a right View of the most high GOD, to see him in a Measure as the Angels and Saints in Heaven do, to see him in his infinite Greatness and Majesty, and in the infinite Glory and Beauty of his Nature. And hence we are made sensible that he is infinitely worthy of the highest Esteem, Reverence, Love, Delight, and of universal Obedience. And hence we see that we in particular are under infinite Obligations to love him with all our Hearts, and obey him in every Thing—and that to do so, is the happiest Thing in the World—that not to do so, is infinitely wrong— and deserves an infinite Punishment. And thus we see the Grounds of the Law of Nature, the Reasons from whence it results, and with all our Hearts consent to it and approve of it as holy, just and good. And this naturally lays the Foundation for us rightly to understand and heartily to approve of the original Constitution with *Adam*.—And while we behold God in his infinite Glory, and view the Law as holy, just and good, and see our infinite Obligations perfectly to conform unto it: now our universal Depravity and infinite ill Desert appears in a clear & divine Light. Hence it appears, we lie at Mercy, and that it is fit he should have Mercy on whom he will, that it becomes the Majesty of Heaven to act as a Sovereign in this Affair. And it appears, that there is no Motive in us to excite his Compassions; but infinitely to the contrary: and hence the Heart is prepared to discern the Freeness of divine Grace, and to perceive that the Goodness of the divine Nature must be self-moving; and also to understand the Need there is of a Mediator to secure the divine Honour: for Creatures so bad appear too vile to be relieved, unless Justice may first be satisfied; 'tis contrary to Law, and contrary to Reason that they should. — And while we view these Things, and have a divine Sense of them on our Hearts, we are hereby prepared to understand the Way of Salvation by free Grace thro' Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Gospel. And now a Sense of the glorious Freeness of

divine Grace, the Excellency and Sufficiency of Chriſt, and the readineſs of God to be reconciled to returning Sinners thro' him, lays the Foundation for Faith and Hope. * — And all this while, there is ſecretly enkindling in the Heart, a moſt genuine Diſpoſition to return home to God, to love him and live to him, ariſing from a Senſe of the ineffable Glory and Beauty of the divine Nature: for he appears glorious in Holineſs, Juſtice, Goodneſs and Grace; and glorious in his Sovereignty and in his Majeſty, as ſupreme Lord and high Governour of the whole World. — Upon the whole, with utmoſt Solemnity, as being in our ſelves infinitely unfit for the divine Favour, we venture our eternal All upon Jeſus Chriſt as *Mediator*, relying on his Worth and Merits, and truſting to the mere free Mercy of God thro' him for Pardon and Grace and Glory, and hence are encouraged and emboldened with our whole Hearts to return home to God thro' him, and give up our ſelves to God for ever, to love him and live to him, and live upon him for ever, lamenting that ever we ſinned againſt him, reſolving to cleave to him with all our Hearts, and never, never to depart from him. *Heb.* 4. 16. & 10. 19—22. *Eph.* 2. 18. *Joh.* 14. 6. *Rom.* 3. 24, 25, 26.—And thus, by this *divine Light*, imparted by the Spirit of God, is the Soul finally brought to unite to Chriſt by Faith, and to return home to God thro' him. Joh. 6. 44, 45. *No Man can come to me, except the Father draw him.—They ſhall be all taught of God. Every Man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father,*

* All theſe Things (altho' it takes conſiderable Time to expreſs them in order) may, for Subſtance, inſtantly open to View, and the Soul immediately acquieſce in the Goſpel Scheme and cloſe with Chriſt; *inſtantly*, I ſay, upon DIVINE LIGHT's being imparted to the Soul. But the Mind, in that ſolemn and awful Hour, may eſpecially fix only upon ſome Particulars; and ſo a Remembrance of theſe may remain, while other Particulars, which were then in View, can't afterwards be recollected. Hence, ſome may doubt whether their *firſt Act of Faith* was *right*. The beſt Way, to remove ſuch Fears, is to live in the Exerciſe of Faith every Day. For when theſe Views, and a conſciouſneſs of them, become habitual, our Scruples will ceaſe of Courſe. The ſpecial Nature of our *Faith* may be learnt from the *after Acts*, as well as by the *firſt Act*; for the *after Acts* will be of the ſame Nature with the *firſt*, let our *Faith* be true or falſe.

ther, cometh unto me. And from what has been said concerning the Nature of the Gospel, it is Self-evident, that herein consists a genuine Compliance therewith. For all this is only to see Things as being what they are, and to be affected and act accordingly.

REMARK 1. This is peculiar to a genuine Compliance with the Gospel, and that whereby it is specifically different from all Counterfeits, namely, it's being founded in, and resulting from, this *divine Light*; whereby we are brought, not merely in Speculation, but in Heart, to look upon Things as God does. He sees all Things *as they are*; and therefore when any poor Sinner is brought to a right View of Things, *i. e.* to see them *as they are*, he must by Consequence look upon them as God does. Now all others being blind and ignorant in Scripture Account, hence this true Sight and Sense of Things is very peculiar and distinguishing. And hence we may observe, that it is mentioned as being peculiar to the Good-Ground-Hearers, in Mat. 13.25. *That they heard the Word and* UNDERSTOOD *it.* And Christ intimates that none but his true Disciples KNOW THE TRUTH. *Joh.* 8. 31, 32. And the Gospel is again & again said *to be hid* from all others. *Mat.* 11. 25. 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. And they only have it REVEALED unto them. *Mat.* 11.25. They only have *the Vail taken off from their Hearts.* 2 Cor. 3.14—17. And they only *behold with* OPEN FACE. Ver. 18.

2. This spiritual and divine Light lays the Foundation for a new Kind of Belief of the Gospel. A Sight of the divine Beauty and Glory of the Gospel Scheme, convinces and assures the Heart that it is divine, and indeed from God, and not a cunningly devised Fable. This is an Evidence peculiar to the Regenerate, and of all others it is unspeakably the most satisfactory. See this largely explained and proved in Mr. *Edwards's* Treatise on religious Affections. *Page*, 182—199.

3. Regeneration, Faith, Repentance and Conversion are in their own Nature connected together, and so they are in this Representation. In Regeneration we receive this divine Light, this new spiritual Sense of Things. Our Eyes are opened, and we are brought out of Darkness into this *marvellous Light*; and so come to have a right View of

God, of our Selves, of Chriſt, and of the Goſpel Way of Salvation by free Grace thro' him.— This ſpiritual Illumination lays the Foundation for Faith, Repentance and Converſion. It diſcovers the Grounds of Faith, of Repentance and Converſion; and we believe, we repent and convert. *Repentance towards God*, and *Faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, always go together. *Act.* 20. 21. And the Goſpel calls Sinners to *repent* and *be converted*, as well as to *believe* in Chriſt. *Act.* 3. 19. Thoſe therefore who ſeem to have much *Light* and *Faith* and *Joy*, but have no *Repentance*, nor do turn to God with all their Hearts, are deluded.

4. Spiritual Light and true Faith are always in Proportion. A ſpiritual Senſe of God, of ourSelves, of Chriſt, and of the Goſpel Way of Salvation by free Grace thro' him, lays the Foundation for Faith; and Faith naturally reſults therefrom; as has been obſerved, and as is evident from *Joh.* 6. 45. And therefore from the Nature of the Caſe, they muſt be in equal Degree in the Heart. And therefore thoſe who pretend to live by Faith, when they are ſpiritually blind and dead, do but deceive themſelves. Nor is what they plead from *Iſai.* 50 10. at all to the Purpoſe: *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the Voice of his Servant, that walketh in Darkneſs and hath no Light? Let him truſt in the Lord, and ſtay upon his God.* Becauſe. 1. The Perſons here ſpoken of were not ſpiritually blind and dead, but had a ſpiritual Senſe of God and divine Things on their Hearts; for they *feared the Lord* and *obeyed his Voice*; ſo that they lived in the Exerciſe of Grace, and walked in the Ways of Holineſs, which without ſpiritual Light had been impoſſible. And — 2. What they were in the Dark about, was, how or by what Means the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould ever be brought out of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, back again to *Zion*; which they knew God had promiſed, but they could ſee no Way wherein it could be brought about. In this Reſpect they *walked in Darkneſs* and could *ſee no Light*, and therefore they are exhorted to put their *Truſt in the Lord*, whoſe Wiſdom, Power and Faithfulneſs are infinite. This is evidently the meaning of the Words, as is manifeſt from the Scope and Tenour of the Prophet's Diſcourſe thro' all

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the ten preceeding Chapters, which was calculated for the Support and Comfort of the Godly in the *Babylonish* Captivity, by assuring them of a Return.* Nor what is said about *Abraham*, that *against Hope, he believed in Hope.*— Nor what is said by St. *Paul*, *We walk by Faith and not by Sight*,— any Thing to their Purpose: unless they suppose, that *Abraham* and *Paul*, and the primitive Christians in general, were as dead and blind and carnal as themselves. —The Truth is, that this *blind Faith* is the very same Thing, which the Apostle *James* calls a *dead Faith*.

5. Evangelical Humiliation and true Faith are likewise always in Proportion. Evangelical Humiliation consists in a Sense of our own Sinfulness, Vileness, Odiousness and Ill-Desert, and in a Disposition thence resulting to lie down in the Dust full of Self-loathing and Self-abhorrence, abased before the Lord, really accounting our selves infinitely too bad ever to venture to come into the divine Presence in our own Names, or to have a Thought of Mercy from God on the Account of our own Goodness. And it is this which makes us sensible of our Need of a Mediator, and makes us desire to be found not in our selves but in Christ, not having on our own Righteousness but his. No farther therefore than these Views and this Temper prevails in us, shall we truly discern any Need of Christ, or be heartily inclined to have any Respect to him as a Mediator between God and us. There can therefore be no more of true Faith in Exercise than there is of this true Humility. When Men therefore appear righteous in their own Eyes, and look upon themselves as deserving well at the Hands

* The three first Verses of the next Chapter, (*Isai.* 51. 1, 2, 3.) do, I think, confirm the above Interpretation of *Isai.* 50. 10. Altho' I Doubt not, the Prophet's Discourse, thro' the aboveSaid ten Chapters, has a farther Look to the *Messiah*'s Kingdom, and our Redemption out of *mystical Babylon*. But let theWords be considered in eitherView, or only considered in themselves absolutely, 'tis plain, they never were designed to comfort *Stony-Ground* Hearers, when theirReligion is all worn out,& they become *dead, blind & carnal*; and so full ofDoubts & Fears: Nor do they mean to embolden such "firmly to believe they are in a "goodEstate,tho' ever so much in theDark. i e. Tho'theysee noGrace "in their Hearts, nor Signs of any:" For the Words are directed *only* to those *who fear the Lord, and obey the Voice of his Servant.*

of God on the Account of their own Goodneſs, they can feel no Need of a Mediator, nor at Heart have any Reſpect to Chriſt under that Character. *Luk.* 5. 31.— This condemns the Faith of the *Self-righteous Formaliſt*, who depends upon his being conſcientious in his Ways, and upon his ſincerely endeavouring to do as well as he can, to recommend him to God. And this condemns alſo the Faith of the *proud Enthuſiaſt*, who appears ſo *Good* in his own Eyes, ſo far from a legal Spirit, ſo purely Evangelical, ſo full of Light and Knowledge, Humility and Love, Zeal and Devotion, as that from a Senſe of his own Goodneſs, and how greatly beloved he is in the Sight of God, he is encouraged, and elevated, and feels greatly emboldned to come into the Preſence of God, and draw near, and come even to his Seat, and uſe Familiarity and Boldneſs with God, as tho' he was almoſt an Equal. Such are ſo far from any true Senſe of their Need of Chriſt, as that they rather feel more fit to be Mediators & Interceſſors in Behalf of others, than to want one for themſelves. And it is the Way of ſuch, from that great Senſe they have of their own Goodneſs, to make bold with God, and to make bold with Chriſt, in their Prayers, as if they felt themſelves pretty nigh upon a Level.—Of all Men in the World, I am ready to think, that God looks upon theſe the worſt, and hates them the moſt. *Luk.* 18. 9—14. *Iſai.* 65. 5. But did they know it, they would hate him as entirely as he does them.—— Hypocrites of all Sorts fail in this Point; they ſee no real Need of Chriſt; they are not ſo bad, but that to their own Senſe and Feeling, they might be pardoned and ſaved by the free Mercy of God, without any Mediator. Hence they do not underſtand the Goſpel, 'tis all Fooliſhneſs to them. 1 *Cor.* 2. 14.

6. It is a ſpiritual Senſe and firm Belief of the Truths of the Goſpel, which encourages the Heart to truſt in Chriſt. *Joh.* 6. 45. That the Goodneſs of God is infinite, and ſelf-moving: that Chriſt, as Mediator, has ſecured the Honour of God the moral Governour of the World, and opened a Way for the free and honourable Exerciſe of his Grace; that thro' Chriſt, God the ſupreme Governour of the World is actually ready to be reconciled, and invites all,

all, the vilest not excepted, to return to him in this Way. These Truths, being spiritually understood and firmly believed, convince the Heart of the Safety of trusting in Christ, and encourage it so to do. *Heb.* 10. 19. *Mat.* 22. 4.

7. Saving Faith consists in that entire Trust, Reliance, or Dependance on Jesus Christ the great Mediator, his Satisfaction and Merits, Mediation and Intercession, which the humbled Sinner has, whereby he is emboldened to return home to God in Hopes of Acceptance, and is encouraged to look to and trust in God thro' him for that compleat Salvation which is offered in the Gospel.— The opposite to justifying Faith, is a self-righteous Spirit & Temper, whereby a Man, from a Conceit of and Reliance upon his own *Goodness*, is emboldened and encouraged to trust and hope in the Mercy of God. *Heb.* 10. 19. 23. *Luk.* 18. 9—14. And accordingly, when such see how *bad* they really are, their Faith fails, they naturally think that God can't find in his Heart to shew Mercy to such.

8. *Faith emboldens the Heart.* In a legal Humiliation, which is antecedent to spiritual Light, the Sinner is brought to a Kind of Despair: The Things, which used to embolden him, do now entirely fail: He finds no Good in himself; yea, he feels himself dead in Sin; and upon this, his Heart dies within him. *I was alive without the Law once; but when the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died,* Rom. 7. 9. And by spiritual Light, in evangelical Humiliation, his undone Estate in and of himself is made still more plain.—But now Faith emboldens the Heart, begets new Courage, lays the Foundation for a new Kind of Hope, a Hope springing entirely from a new Foundation. Heb. 10. 19. *Having therefore Brethren,* BOLDNESS *to enter into the Holiest, by the Blood of Jesus.—Let us draw near with a true Heart in full Assurance of Faith.*—By Faith the Heart is emboldened—1. *To return home to God in Hopes of Acceptance.* A spiritual Sight and Sense of the ineffable Beauty of the divine Nature, begets a Disposition to look upon it the fittest and happiest Thing in the World, to love God with all the Heart, and be entirely devoted to him for ever; and inkindles an Inclination to return and everlastingly give up and consecrate our selves unto him. "But may such a Wretch

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as I be the Lord's? Will he accept me?" Now the Believer, understanding the Way of Acceptance by Christ, and seeing the Safety of it, ventures his All upon this sure Foundation, and hereby is emboldened to return. Heb. 11. 6. *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* i. e. first, He must see what God is, behold him in his Glory, or he can't in a genuine Manner desire to come to him: and secondly, He must see that he is ready to be reconciled unto and to save those, that from a genuine Desire to be his, do heartily return to him thro' the Mediator he has appointed; or else he will not dare to come. But when both these are seen and believed, now the Soul will return and come, and give up it self to God, to be the Lord's for ever. — 2. Faith in Christ emboldens the Heart to look to and trust in the free Grace of God thro' him, for all Things that just such a poor Creature wants, even for all Things offered in the Gospel to poor Sinners. *Heb.* 4. 16. *Let us therefore come* BOLDLY *to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy and find Grace.* Pardoning Mercy and sanctifying Grace are the two great Benefits of the new Covenant: and these are the two great Things which an inlightned Soul feels the want of, and for which he is emboldened to come to God by Jesus Christ.— *I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a People*, saith the Lord in the new Covenant: and *this is all my Salvation, and all my Desire*, saith the Believer.

9. The Word FAITH in Scripture is evidently used in various Senses. Or thus, there are various different Exercises of a godly Soul, all which in Scripture are called FAITH. For I mean here to leave out all those Sorts of *Faith* spoken of in Scripture, which the unregenerate Man is capable of. — 1. It is the Way of godly Men to live under a spiritual Sense of God, his Being and Perfections, and Government of the World, and the Glory, Reality and Importance of divine and eternal Things: even under such a *living Sense* of these Things, as that they are *firmly believed*, and are made to influence them as tho' they were seen. Hence they are said to *look at Things which are unseen.* 2 Cor. 4. 18. *To see him who is invisible.* Heb. 11. 27.

And

And are said *to walk by* FAITH. 2 Cor. 5. 7. And this seems to be the Meaning of the Word FAITH, as it is used in *Heb.* 11. where we read of what *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, and *Moses*, did by FAITH. Their *Faith* was *the Substance of Things hoped for, and Evidence of Things not seen.* i. e. It made divine and eternal Things as it were subsist in all their Glory and Importance before their Minds, and appear as evident as tho' they were seen. ℣. 1.— 2. It is the Way of godly Men to live under a spiritual Sense of the divine All-sufficiency, whereby they are influenced *firmly to believe* that God is able to do all Things for them, and be all to them, which they can possibly Need in Time and to Eternity; by all which, they are influenced to live in a Way of continual *Dependance* upon him for all Things. And this is what, in the Book of *Psalms* and elsewhere, is called *trusting in the Lord*, *waiting* and *leaning upon the Lord*, *making him our Refuge.* This Temper is expressed in Psal. 73. 25, 26. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I desire beside thee. My Flesh and my Heart faileth: But God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever.* And ℣. 28. *It is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my Trust in the Lord.*— 3. It is the Way of godly Men to live under a spiritual Sense of God as the great GOVERNOUR of the World, to whom it belongs to maintain the Rights of the God-Head, and the Honour of the Law; and under a Sense of themselves as poor Sinners, worthy only of Destruction according to Law and Justice, and too bad to be pitied or to have any Mercy shewn them without some sufficient Salvo to the divine Honour; and under a Sense of Christ as a MEDIATOR appointed to be a Propitiation for Sin, to declare God's Righteousness and secure the divine Honour, and so open a Way wherein God might be just and yet justify the Sinner that believes in Jesus: even under such a living Sense of these Things, as that they are *firmly believed*; whereby they are influenced not to draw nigh to God in their own Names, emboldened by their own Goodness; but only in the Name of Christ, DEPENDING ENTIRELY upon him, and EMBOLDEN'D ONLY by his Worth and Merits, Mediation and Intercession, to look for Acceptance in the Sight

of

of God. Hence, becauſe of this *Dependance*, they are ſaid to pray *in Chriſt's Name.* Joh. 16. 23. To have *acceſs to God by him.* Eph. 2. 18. To *come to God thro' him.* Heb. 7. 25. *To believe in God by him.* 1 Pet. 1. 21. And are repreſented as being EMBOLDENED by his Worth and Merits, Mediation and Interceſſion, to approach the Majeſty of Heaven. *Heb.* 4. 16. and 10. 19. And now this is called a *coming to* Chriſt. Joh. 7. 37. A *receiving* him. Joh. 1. 12. A *believing in* Chriſt. Joh. 3. 15, 16. A *believing* ON Chriſt. Joh. 3. 18, 36. A *believing in* HIS NAME. Joh. 1. 12. And a TRUSTING *in* Chriſt. Eph. 1. 12, 13. And *this* is *that Act of Faith* by which we are juſtified and intitled to Life, as is evident from *Rom.* 3. 24, 25, 26. Where it is, by the Apoſtle, called, *Faith in Chriſt's Blood.* —— The Apoſtle conſiders God as the righteous Governour of the World. (*Chap.* 1. 18.) All Mankind as being *guilty before God.* (*Chap.* 3. 9—19.) Chriſt as being *ſet forth to be a Propitiation for Sin.* (℣. 25.) *That God might be juſt and yet juſtify* &c. (℣. 26.) And affirms that we are *juſtified by free Grace thro' the* REDEMPTION *that is in Jeſus Chriſt.* (℣. 24.) *By Faith without the Deeds of the Law.* (℣. 28.) Being conſidered in our ſelves as UNGODLY. (*Chap.* 4. 5.) And this *juſtifying Faith* he calls *Faith in Chriſt's Blood*; becauſe it was principally by the *Death* of Chriſt, that the Ends of moral Government were anſwered, and ſo Law and Juſtice ſatisfied, and a Way opened for the honourable Exerciſe of divine Grace. —— But altho' the Word *Faith* be thus uſed in Scripture in theſe different Senſes, yet we are to remember that theſe various Exerciſes of a godly Soul are connected together, and always concommitant with one another; yea, and in ſome Reſpects implied in each other, and perhaps ſometimes all theſe Actings of Soul are deſigned by the Word *Faith*; nevertheleſs they are evidently in their own Nature ſo diſtinct, as that they may be conceived of as diſtinct Acts of the Soul. —— And it may alſo be noted, that the two firſt of theſe, viz. *a firm Belief of divine Truths*, and *a hearty Reliance on the divine All-ſufficiency*, are Acts of Faith common to Angels as well as Saints; but the laſt, which immediately reſpects Chriſt as Mediator, is peculiar to penitent, returning Sinners.

ners. The two first are common to every holy Creature; for all such do, in a firm Belief of divine Truths, live in an entire Dependance upon God the infinite Fountain of all Good: But the last is peculiar to *sinful* Creatures, who, because they are *sinful*, need a Mediator to make Way for the honourable Exercise of the divine Goodness towards them. Those, that never were Sinners, may receive all Things, from the free Grace and Self-moving Goodness of the divine Nature, without a Mediator. But those, that have been Sinners, perhaps will receive all thro' a Mediator, to Eternity.

10. A Heart to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, to love our Neighbours as our selves, to hate every false Way; to be humble, meek, weaned from the World, heavenly-minded; to be thankful for Mercies, patient under Afflictions, to love Enemies, to forgive Injuries; and in all Things to do as we would be done by: A Heart for all this, I say, is always in exact Proportion to the Degree of true Faith. For the same Views of our own Wretchedness, of God, of Christ, of the Way of Salvation by free Grace thro' him, of the Glory, Reality and Importance of divine & eternal Things, which lay the Foundation for true Faith, and always accompany the Exercise of Faith, do at the same Time lay the Foundation for this divine Temper. And besides, this divine Temper is what every true Believer feels to be the fittest and happiest Thing in the World, and as such longs for it, and goes to God to have it increased & strengthned; and being unworthy to go in his own Name, * he goes in Christ's

* *Unworthy to go in his own Name.* As thus, if in Prayer I offer up this Petition, "Lord, enable me to love thee with all my Heart:" It implies, (1) That I don't love God with all my Heart, notwithstanding the infinite Obligations I am under to do so; for which Defect I am infinitely to Blame, and deserve an infinite Punishment, to be instantly driven from God's Presence for ever, and spurned to Hell as a Creature fit only for Destruction. (2.) It implies that all the external Manifestations which God has made of himself to me in his Works and Word, and all the external Means he has used with me, are not able to win my Heart wholly to God, so great is my Sottishness and Alienation from the Deity, and love to the World and Sin. And now surely

Christ's Name: So that the obtaining more and more of this divine Temper is *one main End* of his exercising Faith in Christ. And whatsoever he asks the Father in Christ's Name, he receives; God is readier to give his holy Spirit to such a one, than Parents be to give Bread to their Children. *Joh.* 16. 23. *Mat.* 7. 11. And therefore every true Believer does obtain the End of his Faith; and not only has, but grows in this divine Temper, and is governed by it, and brings forth Fruit according to it: and thus *shews his Faith by his Works*, according to St. *James's* Doctrine. *Jam.* 2. And herein true Faith stands distinguished from all Counterfeits. Never had a Hypocrite a spiritual Sense of that ineffable Beauty of the divine Nature, which lies at the Foundation of all the Experiences of the true Saint, and from whence all true Holiness originally springs. The *Formalist* may, from legal Fears and mercenary Hopes, be so strict and conscientious in his Ways, as to think himself a choice good Man: and the *Enthusiast*, from a firm Perswasion of the Pardon of his Sins and the Love of Christ, may be so full of Joy and Love, Zeal and Devotion, as to think himself a most eminent Saint: but there is nothing of the Nature of true Holiness in either; for it is *Self* and nothing but *Self*, that is the Principle, Center and End of all their Religion. They do not believe in Christ, that thro' him they may return Home to God, and be consecrated to him for ever, and obtain Grace to do all his Will. They don't know God, or care for him, but are wholly taken up about their own Interest. That *Moravian* Maxim, "That "Salvation consists in the Forgiveness of Sins," exhibits the true Picture of the Heart of the best Hypocrite in the World;

surely such a vile Wretch can't have a Thought of any Mercy from God on the Account of any Goodness in me; yea, rather I am too bad to be pitied, unless there be some sufficient Salvo to the divine Honour. How therefore can God give me the greatest of Gifts, even the sanctifying Influences of his holy Spirit, but thro' the great Mediator, consistent with his Honour as moral Governour of the World. Now therefore being thus unworthy to go to God in my own Name, I go in Christ's Name; as knowing that thro' him God can exercise his infinite, self-moving Goodness to the vilest of Creatures, consistent with his Honour: altho' Law and Justice call for their immediate Destruction, considered as in themselves.

World; while that in 2*Cor.* 3. 18. is peculiar to the Godly. *We all with open Face beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory.*

11. and lastly, In true Believers there is a Principle of Faith, which abides and grows and perseveres to the End. That spiritual Sense of God, of themselves, of Christ, and of the Gospel-Way of Salvation thro' him, which lays the Foundation for the first Act of Faith, becomes habitual. They have a spiritual Understanding to discern spiritual Things. 1*Cor.* 2. 12. They were once *Darkness*, but are now *Light in the Lord:* And hence they are called *Children of the Light and of the Day.* Eph. 5. 8. 1 Thes. 5. 5. Spiritual Light does not come upon Believers like Flashes of Lightning at Midnight, now and then a Flash, and then as dark as ever again: But their Light is habitual, like Day Light. And from the first Dawning of divine Light at the Hour of Conversion, that Day-break of Heaven, their *Light shines more and more*, Year after Year, *to the perfect Day.* Prov. 4. 18. The flying Clouds in the Day Time, altho' they may hide the clear shining of the Sun for a While, yet they don't make it dark as in the Night; yea, the thickest, darkest Clouds are not able to do it. Believers are never destitute of a spiritual Sense of God and Christ and divine Things, as other Men be. They are *Children* of the *Light* and of the *Day*, and not of the *Night* and of *Darkness*. The Spirit of God does not come upon them by Fits, as it did upon *Balaam*; but *dwells* in them. *Rom.* 8. 9. And they *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* 2 Pet. 3. 18. If at any Time they should have no more Sense of divine Things than the Unregenerate, they would be as much without Grace: They would not differ from the *Stony-Ground-Hearers*, who *fell away.*— And now their divine Light being thus habitual, growing and persevering; hence their Faith is so too. Thro' the Course of their Lives, it is their Way, to grow more and more sensible of their Sinfulness, the Sinfulness of Sin, their Unworthiness, Ill-desert, Poverty, and absolute Need of free Grace and of Jesus Christ. And they also see more and more into the Gospel Way of Salvation, the Glory and Safety of it, its Suitableness to

exalt

exalt God, magnify the Law, discountenance Sin, humble the Sinner, and glorify Grace; and more and more come off from all Self-Dependance, to an entire Reliance upon JesusChrist and the free Grace of God thro' him: Seeking to be found not in themselves, but in Christ; not as having on their own Righteousness, but his. *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9. They more fully approve of the Law of Nature and of the originalConstitution with *Adam*, as being holy, just & good: They more fully get into a Way of looking upon themselves as God does; as being naturally and in themselves fallen, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless & undone. They see more and more of their infiniteObligation to perfect Holiness, and of the Reasonableness of eternalDamnation being threatned for the least Sin, and of the Insufficiency of all their best Doings to make any Satisfaction for Sin. The Grace of God as revealed in the Gospel, appears more rich and free and wonderful. They feel more and more of their Need of Christ, his Worth and Merits, Mediation and Intercession; and of their utter Unfitness to approach theMajesty of Heaven any other Way but by him. They feel themselves more full of Wants, and farther off from anyWorthiness to receive, and yet more and more into the Temper of humble Beggars, and into a Way of coming to God more entirely in Christ's Name.— At firstConversion such aTemper begins, & this Temper grows like *the Mustard-Seed*, and spreads like *the Leaven*, and is like *a Well of livingWater*, which is never dry, but is *springing up into everlasting Life*. Mat. 13. 31—33. Joh. 4. 14,—And thus the true Believer *abides in Christ, as a living Branch does in the Vine*. Joh. 15. And *lives the Life he lives in the Flesh, by Faith on the Son of God*, Gal. 2. 20. Being *kept by thePower of God, thro' Faith unto Salvation*. 1 Pet. 1. 5.

And this is the Thing (I may observe by theWay) which makes Grace in the Heart more plainly discernable, and it's Difference from all Counterfeits more clearly manifest, and which therefore clears up to Believers the spiritualState of their Souls, answers all Doubts, removes all Difficulties, and brings them to be settled and satisfied as to their good Estate. Many spend their Lives in searching whether their *Law-work* was right, whether their *first Act of Faith* was

was right, &c. But there is nothing like growing in Grace, to put it out of Doubt that we have Grace, and to keep our Evidences clear. And indeed this is the only Way. 2 *Pet.* 1. 5—10.

And thus we see in *general* wherein a genuine Compliance with the Gospel does consist, and *particularly* what is the Nature of a saving Faith. And from what has been said, we may be able to distinguish true Faith from every Counterfeit. Particularly, from what has been said, we may easily see the Falseness of these two Sorts of Faith, whereby Thousands are deceived and ruined.

1. *The legal Hypocrite's* Faith; who being entirely devoid of the divine Life, and of those spiritual Views of God, of himself, of Christ, and of the Way of Salvation, which the true Believer has, is only animated by Self-love, the Fear of Hell and the Hope of Heaven, to attend upon the external Duties of Religion, and to try to love God and be sincere, in Hopes of Acceptance in the Sight of God, if he endeavours to do as well as he can. He thinks, God has promised to accept such, and that it would not be just for God to require more of him than he can do. He does not see how bad he is, he hates to think of lying at the mere Mercy of God, and can't endure the Doctrine of divine Sovereignty; he is quite insensible of his Need of free Grace and of Jesus Christ: However, he says, he trusts wholly in the Merits of Christ for eternal Life, and does not pretend to merit any Thing by all his Doings. And thus being quieted with the Hopes of Heaven, he goes on in the Rounds of Duty, a Stranger to real Communion with God, and to all the Exercises of the divine Life. He does Duties enough just to keep his Conscience quiet, and has Faith enough just to keep him from seeing that he rests entirely upon his own Righteousness: and by the Means his Duties and his Faith serve only to keep him secure in Sin, and insensible of his perishing Need of Jesus Christ and of converting Grace.

Let me expostulate the Case a little with such a one. And *First*, Can a Man sincerely comply with the Gospel, when at the same Time he does not cordially approve of the Law as holy, just and good, seeing the Gospel in its whole

Conſtitution is evidently founded upon that Suppoſition? You don't like the Law; you think, it is unjuſt. The Law requires you to love God with all your Heart, (*Mat.* 22. 37.) and threatens Damnation for the leaſt Sin: (*Gal.* 3. 10.) But you ſay, it is not juſt for God to require more than you can do, and then damn you for not doing. But now the Goſpel does not mean to make *void* this Law, but to *eſtabliſh* it. *Rom.* 3. 31. It would be impoſſible therefore, if you did but rightly underſtand the Caſe, that you ſhould like the Goſpel any better than you do the Law.—And *ſecondly*, Do you think that God will pardon you, when at the ſame Time you will not acknowledge the Law to be holy, juſt and good, by which you ſtand condemned? What, pardon you, when you juſtify yourſelf, & condemn his Law! What, pardon you, when you won't own you need a Pardon! Yea, when you ſtand to it, it would not be fair to puniſh you! Yea, when you are ready to fly in the very Face of the Law and of the Lawgiver, and to cry out, *Injuſtice, Injuſtice!* No, no, proud, ſtubborn, guilty Wretch, you muſt come down firſt, and lie in the Duſt before the Lord, and approve the Law in the very Bottom of your Heart, and own the Sentence juſt, by which you ſtand condemned. *Luk.* 18. 13. *Rom.* 3. 19. You muſt come down and own the Law to be good, or elſe God muſt come down and own the Law to be bad. Or if God inſiſts upon it that the Law is holy, juſt and good, and you ſtill inſiſt upon it that it is not; it is impoſſible that God ſhould pardon you, or that there ſhould be any Reconciliation. God muſt of Neceſſity hate you, becauſe you hate his Law; and you will for ever hate God, for making ſuch a Law.—— And *thirdly*, How can you pretend all this while, to truſt only in Chriſt for Pardon and eternal Life; when-as it is plain, from your own Words, you ſee no Need of Chriſt? For if, as you ſay, "God can't juſtly require any more of you "than you can do;" what do you want Chriſt for? You can do enough your ſelf. Do you want Chriſt to make Satisfaction for your Short-comings and Imperfections? But, according to your Scheme, God can't require any more Satisfaction than you can make your ſelf: for this would be to require more than you can do, and to damn you

you for not doing. Do you want him to purchase the Favour of God and eternal Life? But you can do all that God can require: for you can do, what you can do, and that, according to your Scheme, is all that God can require. Or do you want Christ to purchase an Abatement of the Law? But if Christ had never died, you don't think, that God could in Justice require more of you than you can do. What Need therefore, upon your Scheme, was there of Christ? And did he not die in vain? *For if Righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.* Gal. 2. 21. Now, can your Faith in Christ be any more than a *mere Fancy*, when-as it is evident you see no Need of him?—— And besides, *fourthly*, What Good does your Faith do you? Does it *work by Love?* Does it *purify your Heart?* Does it *overcome the World?* Why, nothing less. It only serves to keep you secure and quiet in an unrenewed State, and to make you hope all is well, while you keep on in a Round of external Duties, Strangers to God and the divine Life. In a Word, your Duties and your Faith join together to keep Conscience asleep, and to render you insensible of your Need of Christ and of converting Grace. *Rom.* 9. 30, 31, 32. Oh, how sad it is, so many Thousands should be deceived in so plain a Case! It can surely be attributed to nothing short of this, that *Men love Darkness rather than Light*; they love to frame such a Scheme of Religion in their Heads, as suits the Temper of their Hearts. And because their Scheme suits them, therefore they firmly believe it to be divine. But to proceed,

2. From what has been said, we may easily see the Falseness of *the evangelical Hypocrite's* Faith; who, altho' he makes a much greater Shew, and is more confident, yet has not a Jot better Foundation. — He has been greatly awaken'd perhaps, and terrified, and seemingly brought off from his own Righteousness and humbled, and then has received great Light and Comfort, and has had many an Hour of Joy and Ravishment. — For thus was the Case; In the Depth of his Darkness and Sorrow, Light shined all around him; and to his thinking, he saw Heaven opened, and the Lord sitting upon his Throne, and Christ at his right Hand, and heard those Words, *Come ye blessed of my*

Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World: Be of good Chear, thy Sins are forgiven: Fear not, little Flock, 'tis my Father's good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom. Oh thou afflicted, tossed with Tempests, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy Stones with fair Colours, &c. — Or, it may be, he saw Christ on the Cross, with his Blood running from his Side and Hands and Feet. Or, perhaps he saw a Light in his Chamber. — It may be, he had one Scripture, and it may be ten or twenty going, until he was as full as he could hold, and even ready to cry, *Lord, stay thy Hand.* As to all these Things, there is an endless Variety. But in the following Particulars there is a greater Agreement. (1.) They have a Discovery of Christ's Love to them in *particular*, that he died for them in *particular*, that their Sins are pardoned, &c. (2.) The Essence of their first Act of Faith consists in a firm Persuasion, that their Sins are forgiven, that Christ died for them in particular, or the like. (3.) All their after-Discoveries and after-Acts of Faith are of the same Nature with the first. (4.) This Faith, from a Principle of Self-love, naturally fills them full of Joy and Love and Zeal, & lays the Foundation of all their good Frames, and of all their Religion. (5.) Doubting the Goodness of their State, when they are dead & carnal, is in their Account Unbelief, & a great Sin, and to be watched & prayed against, as a Thing of the most destructive Tendency. — Now, some who have a few Discoveries, do in a few Months lose all their Religion, and come to feel & live much like the rest of the World. — Others hold out longer. — Some, after they have lain dead one, two, three, five or ten Years, just as it happens, will have what they call a new Discovery, and be as full as ever. — While others continue in their irreligious Courses.

And here I may observe, (1.) That the greater Discoveries (as they call them) they have, the more proud & conceited they be, and the more do they want to have all the Town admire them. — (2.) The longer they continue to be *lively*, the more do they grow in Pride and Self-Righteousness; and feeling themselves to be exceeding Good, they are emboldened to make very free with the Almighty, as being his peculiar Favourites, and the best of Men. *God,*

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I thank thee, I am not as other Men.— (3.) And yet 'tis natural to esteem themselves some of the most humble Creatures in the World.— (4.) It is impossible to convince them of their Error. Because the immediate Witness of the Spirit of God, as they think, assures them that they are right: And therefore all that don't look upon Things and feel just as they do, are certainly blind and carnal; and so not to be regarded: They are bound to believe God before Man. Urge *Scripture* against them, and they are unmoved; because the Spirit does not tell them that it means so: The plainest Texts are not regarded, if contrary to their Spirit. Urge *Reason* against them, and demonstrate a Point ever so clearly, and they are unmoved; because that is all *carnal Reason*. Take much Pains with them, and be ever so kind and friendly, and they are the more established; because they think they are *persecuted*. Or, if they are sometimes shocked and almost convinced, yet they are in a few Days more settled than ever, by a new Discovery and a Multitude of Scriptures, misapplied by the Prince of Darkness, assuring them that they are right. And now they resolve never to doubt again, and get invincibly set in their Way. (5.) If after a While they lose all their Religion, and are dead, and lie dead for whole Months and Years together, yet still they are as confident as ever. "For, say they, "*David* and *Solomon* and *Peter* fell, and the best are dead "sometimes, and how long a good Man may lie dead none "can tell; God may leave his Children out of Sovereign-"ty, and without Christ we can do Nothing; we must "wait for the Spirit, and not call God's Faithfulness into "Question because of our Deadness, as if his Faithfulness "depended upon our good Frames." And so now having, as they suppose, Christ to pardon their Sins and save their Souls, and some Lust to content their Hearts, they sleep on secure and quiet. Or, if they are terrified at any Time and begin to Doubt, *O thou of little Faith, wherefore dost thou Doubt?* Or some such Scripture, will quiet and hush all to sleep again. And thus, and after this Sort, Things go with them. And now out of such rotten Hearts grow up all the *Antinomian, Familistic* and *Quakerish* Errors which have troubled the Christian Church. For they get their

Principles of Religion, not out of the *Bible*, but out of their *Experiences*: and are careful to cut out a Scheme, in their Heads, to suit the Religion of their Hearts: And because it suits them, therefore they firmly believe it. And because their Scheme is not *rational*, and cannot bear to be examined by *Reason*; therefore they cry down *Reason*, and say it is *carnal:* And they cry down *humanLearning*; and the more ignorant, the more devout. And because their Scheme is not contained in the *Scriptures*, therefore they have no Regard to the *plain Meaning* of Scripture, but turn all into *Allegories*, and what they call the *spiritual Meaning*; and so run into a Hundred Whims, such as best suits with the Temper of their Hearts.

Now the great Misery of this Sort of Hypocrites is, that notwithstanding all their Terrors; yet they were never thoro'ly convinced of their fallen, sinful, guilty, undone Estate by Nature. And notwithstanding all their Discoveries; yet they are still spiritually blind, and neither know God, nor Themselves, nor Christ, nor the Gospel-Way of Salvation by free Grace thro' him. And notwithstanding all their Confidence and Joy and high religious Frames; yet they are as destitute of Faith, Repentance and Holiness, as ever they were. And 'tis a LIE, which *the Father of Lies* has made them believe, which lies at the Bottom of all their Religion, and is the very Foundation of it all. All their purest Joy and Love and Zeal arise from their *Faith*. All their *Faith* consists in *believing that their Sins are forgiven*. And all the Foundation which their *Faith* is originally built upon, is an *immediate Revelation*: The Truth of which, they dare not call in Question, for fear of giving the Lie to the Holy Spirit, from whom, they say, they know it came.— But how could the Spirit of God reveal it to them, that *Christ loved them*, and that *their Sins were forgiven*, and hereby lay the Foundation for their *first Act* of Faith, when-as *before* the *first Act* of Faith, they were *actually* under *Condemnation*, the *Wrath of God*, and the *Curse of the Law?* Joh. 3. 18, 36. Gal. 3. 10. The Thing revealed to them was not true; and therefore was not from God, but from the Devil.— Now this false Revelation laid the Foundation for their Faith, and their Faith laid the Foundation for their Joy,

Joy, and for all their Religion.—A spiritual Sight and divine Sense of the great *Truths* presupposed and revealed in the Gospel, is the Foundation of the godly Man's Faith and Holiness; but a particular Thing no where revealed in the Bible is their Foundation: Yea, a *Falshood* that is directly contrary to what the Scriptures plainly teach.—— And yet alas, they know they are right; they are, they say, as certain of it as they be of their own Existence. How great is the Power of Delusion! How awful is the Case of a poor Creature forsaken of God! 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12. *They received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved. And for this Cause God shall send them strong Delusion, that they should believe a LIE: That they all might be damned, who believed not the Truth, but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness.*

But to conclude,

From what has been said concerning the Nature of a true Faith and a genuine Compliance with the Gospel, we may not only see the Falseness of these two Sorts of Faith, but also of all other Counterfeits, which are almost in an endless Variety. For between these two Extremes of a *legal* and *evangelical* Hypocrite, there lies a Thousand Bye-Paths, in which poor Sinners wander to everlasting Perdition; in the mean while blessing themselves, that they are neither *Arminians* nor *Antinomians*; nor deluded as such and such be: Altho' they neither know God, nor Themselves, nor Christ, nor the Way of Salvation thro' him; and really are as destitute of Faith, Repentance and Holiness, as the most deluded Creature in the World.

Section VIII.

Shewing what is implied in the Everlasting Life *promised to Believers, and how Faith interests us in* Christ.

I am now in the last Place,

V. To consider *the Promise of Everlasting Life*, which is in the Gospel made to true Believers. *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever be-*

lieveth in him ſhould not PERISH, *but have* EVERLASTING LIFE.— In this *everlaſting Life* is implied,

1. *The everlaſting Love and Favour of God.* Whereas *by the Diſobedience of One many were made Sinners*, and *Judgment came upon all to Condemnation*, by Virtue of the original Conſtitution with *Adam*. Rom. 5. 18, 19. And whereas by and according to the Law of Nature *the whole World ſtands Guilty before God*. Rom. 3. 19. Now, by Virtue of a new Conſtitution, eſtabliſhed by the God of Heaven, the great Governour of the World, called the *Goſpel* or Covenant of Grace, it is appointed and as it were confirmed by the broad Seal of Heaven, that any, whoſoever they be, among all the guilty Race of *Adam*, who fall in with this Goſpel-Propoſal, and venture their All upon this new Plan, this new Foundation, this precious Corner-Stone Jeſus Chriſt, the great Mediator between God and Man, ſhall thence for h ſtand free from that double Condemnation, and be intitled unto the everlaſting Love and Favour of God, the great Governour of the World. Joh. 3. 18. Rom. 5. 1, 2. *Therefore being juſtified by Faith we have Peace with God, thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. By whom alſo we have Acceſs by Faith into this Grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoyce in Hope of the Glory of God.*

2. The other Part of this everlaſting Life conſiſts in and reſults from *the everlaſting Indwelling of the holy Spirit as a Sanctifier*. This, which *Adam* loſt by the Fall, is, upon our Union with Chriſt the *ſecond Adam*, by Virtue of this new Conſtitution, reſtored, never to be loſt any more. Joh. 7. 38. *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture ſaith; out of his Belly ſhall flow Rivers of living Water.* v. 39. *This ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive.* And therefore the *Gift of the Holy Ghoſt*, is, by the Apoſtles, (*Act.* 2. 38.) promiſed upon the Condition of Faith.* And therefore

* From the *Nature* of *juſtifying Faith*, it is evident, that *Regeneration* muſt be *prior* to the *firſt Act* of it; but altho' the Sinner be *regenerated* by the gracious Influences of the holy Spirit *before* Faith, yet it is *after* Faith and Union with Chriſt that the Soul has a *Covenant-Right* to the Indwelling of the holy Spirit; which *Covenant-Right* lays a Foundation for the Indwelling of the holy Spirit to be *conſtant* and *everlaſting*; and this lays a Foundation for an *abiding* Principle and proper *Habit*

therefore as God did of old dwell in the Holy of Holies in the *Jewish* Temple, in the Cloud of Glory; so now henceforth does he dwell in the Believer's Heart by his holy Spirit, as a vital Principle and Spring of divine Life there. *Joh.* 15. 1—5. And hence Believers are called *the Temple of God.* 1 Cor. 3. 17. The Spirit of God is said to *dwell in them.* Rom. 8. 9. to *lead them.* ℣. 14. to give them an everlasting Freedom from the Power of Sin. ℣. 2. So that *Sin shall not have Dominion over them.* Rom. 6. 14. *And the Water* (says Christ) *which I will give you, shall be in you a Well of Water springing up into everlasting Life.* Joh. 4. 14.

It is plain from the whole Tenour of the Gospel, that the *everlasting Love and Favour of God*, together with the *everlasting Indwelling of the holy Spirit as a Sanctifier*, which are the two great Things which a poor Sinner wants, are the two great Things promised in the Covenant of Grace. St. *Paul* having explained the Nature of the Gospel-Way of Salvation by free Grace thro' Jesus Christ, and shewn that Faith is the only Condition of the new Covenant, in the four first Chapters of his Epistle to the *Romans*; proceeds to shew the Benefits accruing to Believers. And *first*, they are *justified*, and have *Peace* with God. *Chap.* 5. *Secondly*, they are delivered from the Power of Sin. *Chap.* 6. And altho' they are in this Life continually in a State of spiritual Conflict and Warfare. *Chap.* 7. Yet they are influenced and led and governed by the Spirit of God which dwells in them. *Chap.* 8. And now all Things shall work for their Good, and they shall be brought to Glory at last. ℣. 28—39. So again, see both these summed up in Heb. 8. 10, 11, 12. *For this is the Covenant that I will make with the House of* Israel *after those Days, saith the Lord; I will put my Laws into their Mind, and write them in their Hearts: And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a People. And they shall not teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.*— Here is the everlasting Indwelling of

Habit of Grace. So that altho' *Regeneration* be *before* Faith, yet a *confirmed Habit* of Grace is *after*. It results from our Union with Christ. *Joh.* 15. 1—5. And is in Scripture promised upon the Condition of Faith. *Joh.* 5. 24. & 7. 38.

of the holy Spirit, together with what results therefrom.— *v.* 12. *For I will be merciful unto their Unrighteousness, and their Sins and their Iniquities will I remember no more.*— And here is the everlasting Love and Favour of God.

And now seeing by this new Constitution, this Covenant of Grace, true Believers are thus *intitled* to the everlasting Love and Favour of God, and to the everlasting Indwelling of the holy Spirit as Sanctifier, in the perfect Enjoyment of both which, *eternal Life*, in Heaven, will consist: Hence therefore they are said to *have Life*, yea, to *to have eternal Life*, immediately upon their believing in Christ. 1 *Joh.* 5. 12. *He that hath the Son, hath* LIFE. Joh. 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath* EVERLASTING LIFE. Joh. 5. 24. *Hath* EVERLASTING LIFE, *and shall not come into Condemnation; but is passed from* DEATH *unto* LIFE. Joh. 17. 3. *This is* LIFE ETERNAL, *that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Eternal Life is begun in them, and Heaven begins to dawn in their Souls.

And Believers being thus made the Subjects of the everlasting Love and Favour of God, and of the everlasting Indwelling of the holy Spirit, they are hence called *the Children of God.* Joh. 1. 12. For God loves them as *Children*, and they love him as a *Father.* And this *filial Frame of Spirit*, whereby they are disposed to reverence, fear, love, trust in and obey God as a *Father*, live upon him and live to him as a *Father*; I say, this *filial Frame of Spirit* is called *the Spirit of Adoption*, in Opposition to that *servile Frame of Spirit* they used to be under the Bondage of, *before Faith*, and *before they had received the holy Ghost.* Rom. 8. 15. *For ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

And this filial Frame of Spirit being *peculiar* to Believers, that which none but Believers have, and which yet is common to all Believers; and this filial Frame of Spirit being that wherein Believers bear *the Image of their heavenly Father, each one resembling the Children of a King:* For they view Things according to their Measure, as God does, and love what he loves, and make his Interest their Interest,

and

and are taken up with the same Designs: I say, this filial Frame of Spirit being such a *peculiar* and *remarkable* Thing, and that wherein they so nearly *resemble* God, & being also the immediate Product of the Indwelling and Influence of the holy Spirit, therefore in Scripture it is spoken of as the distinguishing Badge of a true Believer, as a *Mark* whereby God's Children & Christ's *Sheep* are to be known. This is what is called *the Seal of the Spirit*, in Eph. 1. 13. And this *Seal* is the *Witness*, *Evidence* and *Proof* which the holy Spirit gives to our *Consciences*, *that we are the Children of God.* Rom. 8. 16. This filial Frame of Spirit is what *satisfies* and *assures* the Children of God. They feel the very Temper of Children towards God. They feel a Heart to reverence & fear, love & honour him as a Father; a Heart to go to him, to trust in him, to be in Subjection to him & obey him, as a Father. And by this they know they are his Children.

Marvellous is the Change, which the poor Sinner passes thro', in that awful Hour of inexpressible Solemnity, when he first comes into the awful Presence of the dread Majesty of Heaven & Earth, thro' Jesus Christ, the glorious Mediator, venturing his ALL for ETERNITY upon this sure Foundation. And now from this Time forward, he is quite another Creature, under quite new Circumstances. As when Orphan Children, left without a Guardian or a Guide, from running Riot and indulging themselves in all Extravagances, are taken and brought into the Family of a wise and good Man, and are made his Children: he instills new Principles and a new Temper into them, and puts them under a new Discipline, and all Things are *new* to them. So, here, from being without God and without Hope in the World, and from running to eternal Ruin, we are taken and are brought into God's Family, have a new Temper given to us, have a new Father, and are under a new Government. God's fatherly Eye is upon us every Hour, and he is daily labouring to bring us up to his Hand, to train us up to his Mind, to make us such as he would have us be. He contrives and takes all Manner of Ways, by his Spirit, & by his Providence, and by his Word, to make us more serious, spiritual and heavenly, more humble, weaned from the World and devoted to God. And thus

He

He purgeth us, that we may bring forth more Fruit. Joh. 15. 2. He enlightens, he leads, he teaches, he quickens, he ſtrengthens, he comforts us. *Heb.* 8. 10, 11, 12. *Iſai.* 40. 31. When we want it, he inſtructs us. 1 *Joh.* 2. 27. *Jam* 1. 5. When we want it, he corrects us. *Heb.* 12. 6. And when we need it, he encourages and comforts us. 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. When we love him and keep his Commands, he manifeſts himſelf unto us. *Joh.* 14. 21. And when our ſpiritual Enemies are too ſtrong for us, and our Heart and our Strength fails, our Steps are ſlipping, our Feet juſt gone; in the diſtreſſing Juncture he puts underneath his everlaſting Arms, he takes us by the right Hand, he prevents us by his Grace; and e'er we are aware, we have gotten the Victory, and begin to ſay, *Whom have we in Heaven but thee? And there is none on Earth we deſire beſides thee. Our Fleſh & our Heart faileth, but God is the Strength of our Heart, and our Portion for ever:* And O, *It is good for us to draw near to God.* Pſal. 73. And if at any Time we forſake him, he follows after us, and *viſits our Tranſgreſſions with the Rod*, and *our Iniquities with Stripes*; but never breaks his Covenant with us. *Pſal.* 89. 30—34. *He hedges up our Way with Thorns*, & brings us to a hearty Return. *Hoſ.* 2. 6, 7. And thus *we are kept by the Power of God thro' Faith unto Salvation.* 1 Pet. 1. 5. And finally are brought to the full Viſion and perfect Fruition of God to all Eternity. *Rom.* 8. 30.

Now *Faith* in Chriſt intitles us to all this, by Virtue of that divine Conſtitution, which we call *the Goſpel* or *Covenant of Grace*; by Virtue of that new and living Way of Salvation, which God the great Governour of the World has contrived and provided, ratified and confirmed, the Sum of which is contained in *Joh.* 3. 16. Which Conſtitution God has been pleaſed to confirm by an *Oath*, to the Intent *we might have ſtrong Conſolation, who have fled for Refuge, to lay hold on the Hope ſet before us.* He has ſaid, *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved*, and he has confirmed it by an *Oath*, to remove all Doubt, and to give the higheſt poſſible Aſſurance. *Heb.* 6. 17, 18. And now being aſſured that this Way of Salvation may be depended upon, as being contrived and confirmed by God himſelf; hence,

here

here we rest secure and safe. — We know that this new Constitution must be from God, because the whole Plan is altogether divine: It is just like God: God can't but be pleased with it: It is perfectly suited to exalt God, to magnify the Law, to discountenance Sin, to humble the Sinner and to glorify Grace: and if Sinners are ever saved, it is infinitely fit that they should be saved in such a Way, and in no other. There is such an apparent Resemblance of the divine Nature & Perfections in this whole Plan, as is sufficient to assure the Heart that it is from God. None but God could be the Author of it. 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4, 6.— And being in the *first* Place, assured that it is from God: We have, in the *second Place*, the highest Assurance that God will abide by it and act according to it. For *first*, we have his *Promise*; and *secondly*, we have his *Oath:* So that there can be no reasonable Doubt remaining. — And now upon this Foundation does the true Believer build all his Hopes and Expectations, here is the Bottom of all. For if I am assured, that, by divine Grace, I do rightly understand the Gospel, and am brought to a genuine Compliance therewith; now then I am *safe*, if the *Gospel* be TRUE, and if that Way of Salvation may CERTAINLY be depended on, if it be no *cunningly devised Fable*, but a Way of God's own Contrivance, and which he will CERTAINLY abide by. A clear, rational, spiritual Conviction and Assurance of this, is the very *Anchor of the Soul, sure and stedfast.* Heb. 6. 19.

If Mankind had remained in a State of *pure Nature*, i. e. under no Constitution at all, under nothing but merely *the Law of Nature*, i. e. To have been guided and directed to their Duty, and to have been rewarded or punished by God, only and merely by and according to the Reason and Nature of Things: If this had been the Case, then so long as every Individual should be continued in Being by God, and should continue to love God with all his Heart, and obey him in every Thing; so long every Individual would be perfectly happy. But then, God might without Injustice let one or all drop into Non-Existence, if he pleased, and when he pleased, altho' perfectly holy. *Job* 22. 2. & 35. 7. Or, if he was pleased to continue one and all in Being for ever;

ever; yet at what Time ſoever any ſhould commit the leaſt Sin, that Soul ſhould immediately ſink down into an eternal Hell. *Rom.* 6. 23. A Thouſand Years of perfect Obedience, by the mere Law of Nature, not intitling to any Promiſe for the Time to come. God's giving and continuing Being to us, and granting us Advantages to know and love and ſerve him, would render us infinitely indebted to God; but our knowing, loving and ſerving God could not bring him at all into Debt to us. *Rom.* 11. 35, 36. Our doing ſo would naturally render us happy, ſo long as we ſhould continue to do ſo; but if, at any Time, we ſhould be guilty of the leaſt Defect, all would be loſt, and we undone for ever.

But then, by and according to the Conſtitution with *Adam*, Things were placed upon another Foot. The eternal Welfare of Mankind was ſuſpended upon another Condition. For according to this Conſtitution, if *Adam* the publick Head and Repreſentative of Mankind, had remained obedient for ſome certain Period of Time, he and all his Poſterity would, by the free and gracious Promiſe of God, have been entitled to everlaſting Life: as on the other Hand, if he ſinned, all would be expoſed to eternal Death.

But now, Faith *in Chriſt* intitles us to eternal Life, by Virtue of a new Conſtitution, called the *Goſpel* or *Covenant of Grace*, made and confirmed by the God of Heaven.

The perfect Obedience of *Adam*, had he ſtood, would not have intitled us to eternal Life, notwithſtanding he was our natural Head, if he had not been made our Repreſentative by a divine Conſtitution: So the perfect Obedience and Sufferings of Chriſt would not have freed us from Condemnation and entitled us to eternal Life, whatever Dependance we might have had upon him; if by a divine Conſtitution it had not been appointed and confirmed, that *he that believeth ſhall be ſaved.*

By and according to *the Law of Nature*, our own perſonal Obedience would have recommended us to the Favour of God, and laid the Foundation of our Happineſs, ſo long as we ſhould have continued in a State of ſinleſs Perfection.—By *the firſt Covenant*, the Conſtitution with *Adam*, his perfect

fect Obedience, thro' his appointed Time of Trial, would, by Virtue of that Constitution or Covenant, have entitled us to everlasting Life.— By *the second Covenant*, the perfect Righteousness of Christ the *second Adam*, entitles all true Believers to everlasting Life, by and according to this new and living Way.

A perfect Righteousness was necessary according to the Law of Nature. And a perfect Righteousness is insisted upon in both Covenants. According to the Law of Nature, it was to be performed *personally* : But according to both Covenants, it is appointed to be performed by a *public Head*.— According to the first Covenant, we were to have been interested in the Righteousness of our publick Head, by Virtue of our Union to him as his Posterity for whom he was appointed to act.— According to the second Covenant, we are interested in the Righteousness of Christ our public Head, by Virtue of our Union to him by Faith.

Our *Faith* is that whereby we *unite* to Christ. The Act is a *uniting Act*. We disunite, separate from and renounce, *that*, to which, we before were united and did close with and placed our Hopes upon, *viz.* our own Righteousness ; and are no more emboldened by *that* to come into the Presence of God : And we unite to Christ, desiring to be found, not in our selves, but in him ; not in our own Righteousness, but in his. *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. And from him we take Encouragement to draw nigh to God ; we come in HIS NAME. *Heb.* 4. 16. And now, by Virtue of a divine Constitution established by the Governour of the World, all, who thus unite to Christ by Faith, are considered as being one with him, so as to have an Interest in what he has done and suffered in the Character of a Mediator as a publick Person, so as upon the Account thereof to be pardoned and received to Favour, and entitled to eternal Life. *Rom.* 5. 18, 19. *Eph.* 1. 6. *Rom.* 3. 24, 25.

And now, this Faith, this uniting Act, being the *Condition*, the *only Condition*, required on our Part, by the Covenant of Grace, we being *justified by Faith without the Deeds of the Law* ; Hence, *Faith* is said to be *imputed to us for Righteousness*. Rom. 4. For *Righteousness*, i. e. for that whereby we *stand Right* according to the Tenour of the new Covenant,

Covenant, *i. e.* for a *full Compliance* with the Condition of the new Covenant. As perfect Obedience was a Compliance with the Covenant of Works; so Faith is a Compliance with the Covenant of Grace. Now as perfect Obedience, thro' his whole Time of Trial, would have been imputed to *Adam* for *Righteousness*, i. e. for a *full* Compliance with the Condition of that Covenant: So now Faith is imputed for *Righteousness*, i. e. for a *full* Compliance with the Condition of this Covenant. For St. *Paul* had but just been proving, that we are *justified by Faith* ALONE, *without the Deeds of the Law*; and now *this* being the ONLY Condition required, therefore he says, *it* is accounted as a *full* Compliance with the new Covenant, *i. e.* it is *imputed for Righteousness*. It being the *only* Thing required as a Condition of Life, by the Covenant of Grace, hence it is looked upon in the Sight of God accordingly, as being a *full* Compliance with that Covenant.— The Covenant of Works insisted upon perfect Obedience, because *Adam* was to have been justified, merely by, and wholly upon the Account of, his own Virtue and Goodness: And the Covenant of Grace insists upon *Faith alone without the Deeds of the Law*, because now we are justified, merely by, and wholly upon the Account of, Christ's Virtue or Righteousness, without Regard to any Goodness in us. *But to him that* WORKETH NOT, *but believeth on him that justifieth the* UNGODLY, *his Faith is counted for Righteousness*. Rom. 4. 5. *i. e.* for a FULL Compliance with the new Covenant, *without the Deeds of the Law*. For as to a *legal Righteousness*, Christ is *the End of the Law for Righteousness to them that believe*. Rom. 10. 5. And in that Sense, we are not to be found in our own Righteousness, but in his. *Phil.* 3. 8.

Thus, according to the Law of Nature, every Man would have been justified by his own personal Righteousness. And according to the first Covenant, every Child of *Adam* would have been justified by *Adam's* Righteousness as publick Head. And according to the second Covenant, every Believer is to be justified by Christ's Righteousness as another publick Head. The first of these Ways takes it's Rise from the Reason and Nature of Things; but the second and third from the positive Appointment of God.

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The Angels, it seems, were dealt with according to the first of these Ways, only their State of Probation, thro' Grace, not to be perpetual; for, no Doubt, those that stood, are now in a confirmed State: but Mankind are dealt with according to the second and third.

The first of these Ways a fallen World pretend some liking to, but the other two have given great Offence. "How is it right we should be condemned for *Adam's* Sin? "Or with what Propriety can we be justified on the Ac- "count of Christ's Righteousness?" is the Language of very many. "It is unjust to condemn me for the Sin of "another, and absurd to justify me for another's Righte- ousness," say they. And as to the first of these Ways, they would have the Law abated in what it requires, and quite disannul'd as to it's threatening Death for the least Sin. They would have what they call sincere Obedience admitted as a Condition of Life, and Repentance to be accepted in Case of Sin. So that an apostate World are naturally equally at Enmity against the first, second and third, rightly understood. For they think it full as unjust that God should damn us for the least Defect of perfect Obedience, as for *Adam's* first Sin. And it is nothing but divine Light can bring the Heart of a Sinner sincerely to approve of the Law of Nature, of the Constitution with *Adam*, and of the Gospel of Christ. For (1 Cor. 2. 14.) *the natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God: for they are Foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* He does not discern the Ground and Reason of the Law of Nature, being blind to the infinite Beauty of the divine Perfections: and so is incapacitated to have a right View and Sense of the Nature of the first Covenant or the second. And being a Stranger and an Enemy to God, he also naturally doubts, whether he has full Power and rightful Authority to make such Constitutions; he dislikes the Constitutions; he questions God's Authority to make such; their being so plainly held forth in the Bible, tempts many to call even the Truth of that into Question; and some are driven quite to open Infidelity.

There is a secret Infidelity in the Hearts of unregenerate Men. They do not love that divine Scheme of Truths re-

vealed in the Bible, nor cordially receive it for true. Men love to cut out a Scheme of Religion in their Heads, to ſuit the Temper of their Hearts. And from this Root do all the falſe and erroneous Principles, which fill the Chriſtian World, originally take their Riſe. 2 *Theſ.* 2. 10, 11, 12. But when he that commanded the Light to ſhine out of Darkneſs, ſhines in the Heart and gives ſpiritual Light; then the Reaſonableneſs, Beauty and Glory of the whole Scheme appear, and the very Reſemblance of the divine Perfections is to be ſeen in every Branch of it. And now it is cordially believed. *Joh.* 8. 47. And hereby a ſolid Foundation is laid for a real Conformity to the Law, and a genuine Compliance with the Goſpel; in both which true Religion does conſiſt.

Thus we have gone thro' what was propoſed. And we ſee why God the great Governour of the World did conſider Mankind as *periſhing*, fallen, ſinful, guilty, juſtly condemned, helpleſs and undone: and we ſee that his Deſign of Mercy originally took it's Riſe from the meer ſelf-moving Goodneſs of his Nature, and ſovereign good Pleaſure: and we ſee the Neceſſity there was of a Mediator, and how the Way of Life has been opened by him whom God has provided: And we ſee wherein a genuine Compliance with the Goſpel does conſiſt, and the Nature of a true Faith in Chriſt: And we ſee what is implied in the everlaſting Life that is promiſed to Believers, and how Faith intereſts us in the Promiſe, and how that the Covenant is in all Things well ordered and ſure.— And now there is a wide Field opened for a large Improvement, in many doctrinal and practical Inferences and Remarks.—— For,

1. It is very natural to make the ſame Obſervations here with Regard to a genuine Compliance with the *Goſpel*, as were before made with Reſpect to a real Conformity to the *Law*. For, from what has been ſaid, we may eaſily ſee, wherein conſiſts that Life of Faith in Chriſt, which true Believers live;—That all unregenerate Men are entirely deſtitute of this true Faith in Chriſt; —Yea, diametrically oppoſite thereunto in the Temper of their Minds;—And therefore can't be brought to it but by the almighty Power and all-

conquering

conquering Grace of God; — That there is nothing in them to move God to do this for them, but every Thing to the contrary — That God is at perfect Liberty to have Mercy on whom he will according to his sovereign Pleasure— That it is reasonable to think, that the same sovereign good Pleasure, which moves him to be the Author, will move him to be the Finisher of our Faith — That true Faith, being thus specifically different from every Counterfeit, may therefore be discerned and known, &c. But because I have already been Larger than at first I designed, therefore I will omit these, and all other Remarks which might be made; and will conclude,

2. With only this one Observation, *viz.* That if these Things be true, which have been said concerning the Nature of Faith and the Way of Salvation by free Grace thro' Christ, and concerning that View of Things which the true Believer has; then nothing is more plain and evident, than that the true Believer must needs feel himself to be under the strongest Obligations possible, to an entire *Devotedness* to GOD and a Life of universal *Holiness*. Every Thing meets, in that View of Things which he has, to bind his Soul for ever to the Lord. One main Design of the Gospel was to make Men holy; and it is in it's Nature perfectly well adapted to answer the End.

For now all the natural Obligations, we are under to love God and live to him, are seen in a divine Light; such as arise from the infinite Excellency of the divine Nature, God's entire Right to us and Authority over us: And their binding Nature is exhibited in a more striking and affecting Manner in the Gospel, than in the Law; the *Cross* of Christ gives a more lively Representation of the infinite Evil of Sin, than all the Thunders of Mount *Sinai*. And a Sight of our natural Obligations are attended with a Sense of all the additional sacred Ties, arising from the infinite Goodness of God to a guilty ruined World in providing a Saviour, and from the dying Love of Christ, and from the free Gift of converting Grace, and from pardoning Mercy, and from God's Covenant-Love and Faithfulness, and from the raised Expectations of eternal Glory: All which must join to beget a right Sense of Sin, as being

Thing, in it self, the most unfit, unreasonable and wicked, as well as infinitely disingenuous and ungrateful to God, and concur to make it appear as the worst of Evils, the most to be hated, dreaded, watched and prayed against: And a humble Heart, full of Self-Diffidence, and under a Sense of the divine All-sufficience, and in a firm Belief of the Truth of the Gospel, will most naturally, and as it were continually, apply it self, by Faith and Prayer, to God thro' Christ, to be kept from all Sin, and to be preserved to the heavenly Kingdom. So that those Views, which the true Believer has, have the strongest Tendency to universal Holiness, and do naturally lay a solid Foundation for it. And those Views are not only maintained in a greater or less Degree from Day to Day, by the gracious Influence of the holy Spirit, which dwells in them; but are increasing and brightening thro' the Course of their Lives. So that as the grand Design of the Gospel is to make Men holy, so it is perfectly well adapted in it's Nature to answer the End. And therefore *he that is born of God, sinneth not*; and *how shall we that are dead to Sin, live any longer therein?* And such like Scriptures, must, in the Nature of Things, be found to be true, in the Experience of every real Believer. Nor can any but graceless Hypocrites be emboldened, by the Doctrines of free Grace, to sin, as it were upon free Cost: and a double Vengeance will they pull down upon their guilty Heads.

Particularly, the whole Frame & Tenour of the Gospel naturally tends to excite us to a universal *Benevolence* to Mankind in Imitation of the infinite Goodness of the divine Nature; and even to be benevolent & kind to the Evil and Unthankful, & to those in whom there is no Motive to excite our good Will, but much to the contrary; and to love our Enemies, and bless them that curse us, and do Good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us. It is impossible when we see the infinite Beauty of the self-moving Goodness of the divine Nature as exercised in the whole Affair of our Redemption and Salvation, towards Creatures so infinitely vile, unworthy and ill-deserving, but that we should love that glorious Goodness, and be changed into the same Image, and have

have it become natural to us to love Enemies, and forgive Injuries, and be like God. A *malicious Christian*, a *spightful Believer*, is the greatest Contradiction, and the most unnatural Thing.

That which has had no small Hand in bringing the Doctrines of Grace into Contempt in the World, as tending to Licentiousness, is partly because they have not been rightly understood, and partly thro' the wicked Lives of graceless Hypocrites, who have made a high Profession. What remains now therefore but that the People of God, by holy and exemplary Lives, should convince the World, that these are *Doctrines according to Godliness.*

I beseech you therefore by the Mercies of God, that ye present your Selves a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable Service. For *you are not your own, but bought with a Price:* And that *not of Silver and Gold, but of the precious Blood of the Son of God*; and therefore *live no more to your Selves, but to him that died for you.* And *be ye Followers of God as dear Children. Blessed be God, for the unspeakable Gift of his Son.* AMEN.

FINIS.

THE

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